THE

NEW YORK LEDGER

DEVOTED TO CHOICE LITERATURE ROMANCE THE NEWS AND COMMERCE

VOL. XIV. R. BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR, NO. 44 ANN-STREET. NEW YORK, JULY 10, 1858. TERMS, $2 PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE. NO. 18.

NATIONAL SONG.

(A FOURTH OF JULY OFFERING.)

Air—*Yankee Doodle.*

WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

O! let us fling our banners out,
With Stars and Eagles glowing
Above the vale and mountain's top,
And Ocean for us flowing.

We know by whom they first were flung
Like thunder-storms defiant;
And still we see them fearless float,
On Freedom's God reliant.

The martyr's blood is on their folds,
The air we breathe caressing;
And on each symbol sparkles still
Our Washington's own blessing.

They dashed for Liberty and Right
At Tyrant, Hessian, Tory,
Till shouting Yorktown gave to him
The Triumph's crowning glory.

And now while on our peaceful way,
Plain, mount and wood subduing,
Like God's own stars they smile o'er us—
The good of man pursuing:

But if again the tyrant strikes,
He'll see o'er battle burning,
The starry emblems as of yore
To thunder tempests turning.

Then shout for mothers, fathers, wives,
For brothers, sons and daughters,
Who on the hills in freedom walk,
And by the chainless waters:

For UNION is our love and hope,
With Stars and Eagles glowing
Above the Continent, and Sea,
Around the wide world flowing.

BLANCHE BERTRAND;

OR,

PERILS OF THE BORDER.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1858, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE FOREST BLOCKHOUSE.

For something like an hour the scouts worked vigorously at the outer defenses of their present place of refuge, by which time the gate had been made secure; and the different posts of the palisades so tightened as to be in a pretty good condition for receiving an assault. But the blockhouse, after all, was their main dependence; and a careful examination of this convinced them that it could be held for some considerable time against any force which could be brought against it—unless, indeed, it should be assailed by fire—concerning which they felt no present anxiety, because of all the materials of which it was constructed being well water-soaked by the late rain.

The structure in question was built in the regular blockhouse style, two stories in hight, the upper one projecting some two or three feet over the lower one, with openings for firing down, so that a small force stationed within could even prevent a large party from making a lodgment under the walls. The rear side was, as we have stated, protected by a steep bank—a rocky bluff, in fact—some twenty feet above the river; and the building had been erected upon the very edge of this bank, with the upper story projecting over it, so that a bucket could readily be lowered to the water—a precaution which the builders had taken to protect themselves against the want of that element during a long siege, either for domestic use or in case of an attempt being made to burn them out. Besides several loop-holes, cut through the four walls of the upper story, there was a sort of trap door in the roof, by means of which a look-out could command a view of the whole scene for a considerable distance around. An examination of the interior also discovered several important articles, which tended to put our friends in rather good spirits, and seemed to prove that the party leaving had either done so in haste, or meditated a return, or perhaps both, and that no close inspection had ever been made of the building by the savages. Besides a quantity of dried grass and rushes, a slab table, a few slab benches, and an old iron kettle, which were found in the lower story, the upper one, to which access was had by a ladder, contained a sort of rude tank, a bucket with a long rope attached, and an iron swivel, somewhat the worse for rust.

"We've got the tools here for a good siege, all 'cept the fodder," said Kenton, with an air of satisfaction, as he concluded his inspection of the whole building; "and the only things as I see to trouble us much, is the want of perwisions and the loss of our hosses; and I wouldn't like to lose them, arter all the trouble we've tuk to git 'em away—for ef any man on the border has got a leaning for hoss flesh, that thar man's me."

"'Specially Injun hoss!" put in Wetzel.

"Jest so, Lew—jest so; kase why—them's critters as don't belong to us, and all we git o' them is cl'ar gain."

"But why do you fear the loss of our horses?" inquired Eugene. "They are within the inclosure, and the palisades are now in good condition."

"But they won't keep out a big party of the devils arter night!"

"Then you think it certain that we shall be here to-night?"

"That's purty sartin, young man, unless we goes our last journey; for we can't git away the way things is; and the Injuns, when they come up, won't let us off without a long fight, ef they do at all."

"Well, we should not borrow trouble!" observed

SETH HARPER SEES AN OPPORTUNITY.

Blanche, who stood listening to the conversation. "We have so far [illegible] the same good Providence may give us another unexpected deliverance!"

"That's true as preaching, Miss, and I like your sperit!" replied the woodsman; "and we arn't them kind as is a gwine to gin in easy, nohow! Thar's eight of us yit—leaving out you and counting in the nigger—or I s'pect we'd better count you in and leave him out: leastways, eyther or nyther way, thar's seven o' us as knows how to handle our arms, and not back down; and seven marksmen in here can purty much damage a hundred brutes outside. Ah!" he added, with a sigh that found a ready response in the breasts of all who heard him; "I wish we only had the t'other two poor fellers with us, who're scalped and gone long afore this!"

For a few moments there was a deep silence, and then Blanche said:

"Poor fellows, indeed! and their fate might have been ours, and may be yet—though a better fate, as I look upon it, than being taken prisoners—for if death has ended their struggles, they have been saved from painful tortures."

"They war true boys, and it's hard to lose 'em!" said Kenton, with considerable feeling; "but then it's a matter as we must allers expect to see hap in this here barbarous region; and thar's no knowing whose turn'll come next: it's like it may be ourn afore many days!"

"God forbid!" ejaculated Blanche. And then immediately added, in a more cheerful tone: "But perhaps the Indians will not assail us here, after all; for I have been most of the time on the lookout, and have not seen a solitary one since we entered here; even those we saw at first appear to have withdrawn, and probably were as much alarmed as ourselves."

"Ef they don't attack us, so much the better for them; but never you believe they won't, Miss Bertrand! Them as we seed may hev put off, or they may not; and they may know nothing about t'others, and think it's quite like, ef they lay low, we'll come out agin; but the t'others is only really off on the wrong scent; and as soon as they diskiver thar mistake, they'll be flocking about here, like buzzards over a dead b'ar!"

"Is it not a little strange," said Eugene, "that the party we supposed would mount and follow us, have not yet made their appearance?"

"They may hev tuk the wrong scent, too, and got puzzled by coming up with t'others; but they'll be here soon enough, never you fear?"

"Heaven defend us!" said Eugene, rather gloomily. "It is terrible to think that, whenever we succeed in making our escape, and everything appears to go safely at first, something should always immediately occur to bring us into peril! To think that we are now within a few hours' ride of safety, with horses in our possession, and not an enemy in sight, and yet cannot escape!"

"God works for the best, Eugene!" said Blanche, solemnly; "and considering the difficulties, trials, and dangers which, by an almost natural course, have surrounded us, we should now, instead of complaint, be grateful to the Supreme Being that our fate is no worse!"

"And I am grateful, Miss Blanche!" returned Eugene; "God knows my heart swells with gratitude to know that you are here, even here, where there is a hope, if no other hope, that your spirit may pass to a better world, ere your mortal body again fall into the hands of the terrible beings from whom you have been rescued!—but still I could be more grateful, more happy, were I to know you in a position of real, rather than comparative, safety!"

"Always thinking of me!" rejoined Blanche, in a low, sweet tone, which reached only the ear of the one for whom it was intended: "Always thinking of me, Eugene, rather than yourself!"

"Because we always think most of what we love best!" was the reply, spoken in a low, solemn tone of [illegible]

The words seemed to have passed the lips of Eugene as it were involuntarily; the acknowledgment of his passion, which they contained, he had not previously considered; he had spoken from his heart, without knowing to what his heart had given utterance; and it was not till, looking steadily at Blanche, he perceived her features flush deeply, that he seemed to comprehend what he had said; and then, in an instant, the truth flashed back upon him, and he became so painfully confused and embarrassed as not to be able to utter a single word of the apology he attempted.

At this moment, greatly to the relief of Eugene, if not of Blanche, Neil Washburn, who was occupying the position of look-out from the roof of the block-house, arrested the attention of all, by the exclamation:

"Thar they come, I do believe!"

"Whar? whar?" called out two or three voices simultaneously.

"Off thar to the east, a good distance back in the woods, right over our trail."

All flew to the different loop-holes which commanded a view in that direction; and though all did not perceive the enemy at once, they had not long to wait, ere the latter, numbering some twenty or thirty mounted warriors, were distinctly seen advancing at a fast gallop.

"Thar's no time to waste," said Kenton, hurriedly; "for thar's several things to be done afore they come up! Quick, boys! two of you haul up the water, and fill that thar tank, so as we wont be bothered that way arter we begin the fight—for fight I 'spose thar'll hev to be—and the rest of us will shoot off our guns and pistols, and load 'em up anew, and hev 'em in good order, so that every shot will tell!"

"If the horses could be brought into the lower apartment," suggested Eugene, "I think we might preserve them as long as we do ourselves."

"That's not a bad idee, nyther!" rejoined the leader of the scouts; "and ef the doors is big enough, we'll do it."

A few minutes of active excitement followed. The door was found large enough, and the horses were soon placed in greater security by Kenton and Duke, while the others drew up what water was needed, and discharged and re-loaded all their fire-arms. Meantime the Indians, hearing the firing, rode forward into a line, and halted at the distance of some two hundred yards, presenting quite a military appearance. They were evidently not a little surprised at hearing the discharge of the guns, and not as yet exactly certain whether the party within was the one they were pursuing or another.

Such was the position of affairs when Kenton returned from below, and declared that now, "sence all things war safe, he thought he should rayther like the fun of seeing the devils try to take them, and so git a chance to pepper a few.

"They don't exactly know what to make o' us," he continued, as he surveyed them through one of the loop-holes; "and ef we can only make that thar swivel do its duty, without blowing our brains out inside, we'll gin 'em the first skeer as they've had sence last night. Let's try it, boys, anyhow!"

The swivel was accordingly quickly overhauled, the main portion of the rust removed, and a moderate charge of powder put into it, together with quite a handful of rifle balls. It was then mounted upon the slab-table, which was brought up from below for the purpose, and aimed through one of the loop-holes, directly at the savages, who had by this time drawn themselves close together, in a circular body, as if holding a consultation. Next a train was laid; which Seth, after striking a light, proceeded to fire—making haste, the moment it was done, to throw himself, with the others, flat upon the floor, at the further part of the room, to escape the danger of an explosion. But no explosion followed, save a legitimate one, as the piece went off with a stunning report.

Whether the Indians were in any manner injured by the contents, was not so certain; but on springing to the loop-holes, our friends had the satisfaction of seeing them swiftly scattering in different directions; and they inferred if none were struck, they had at least heard some of the balls whistling in too close a proximity to feel entirely safe where they were.

"Good for old swivel!" cried Kenton, with a laugh; "she's one on 'em, she is; and what she's said now, she's ready to say agin, whensomever the ugly brutes takes a notion to come up nigh enough to ax her a question!"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE PARLEY.

From the sudden scattering and disappearance of the savages, several anxious hours passed away, during which nothing more was seen or heard of them; and Eugene and Blanche, less experienced in Indian ways than the others, were beginning to indulge the hope, in spite of the opinion of the scouts to the contrary, that through some good fortune they might not be again molested; when suddenly Blanche, who was standing near one of the loop-holes, conversing with Eugene, grasped the arm of her companion somewhat nervously, and exclaimed:

"Look yonder, Eugene! look yonder! I do believe that is our mutual foe, Ralph Hawley!"

"Yes, that is the villain beyond a doubt!" returned Eugene, looking through the aperture, and perceiving the object of his dislike standing just in the edge of the woods before them. "There! see! he is holding up something white on the end of a stick, which he doubtless intends for a flag of truce! He evidently desires to communicate with us!"

"Wall, jest wait a bit!" observed Seth, who had made the discovery of the person of the renegade at the same time as Blanche, and now spoke partly to himself and partly in reply to Eugene: "jest wait a bit—lay low—keep docile, and don't say nothing to skeer the brute!—its a good long range, but I 'spect I can do it!" and with the words he slowly and deliberately raised his rifle and began to take sight.

"Hold, Seth! hold! do not fire!" cried Eugene, springing forward and placing his hand upon the barrel of the piece.

"No! no!" joined in Blanche; "if it is his intention to approach us peacefully, let us hear what he has to say!"

"And you'll hear a pack of confounded lies, Miss Blanche!" growled Seth; "for that thar beast couldn't open his mouth and tell a p'inted fact, ef he'd try to etarnity. And as for you, Captain Fairfax," continued Seth, uncocking his rifle, and speaking somewhat angrily, "you're allers a stepping atween me and that devil; and though I respect you amazing, I'm a little afeard you'll do it once too many!"

"I have interfered some two or three times, it is true," replied Eugene; "but only because you have always chosen the wrong time to execute your purpose."

"Thar arn't no wrong time to kill that bloody scoundrel!" muttered Seth, turning away with a dissatisfied air.

None of the others seemed to feel inclined to molest the renegade, at least before hearing what he had to advance; but he evidently did not know this, and appeared afraid to venture near before getting permission from the parties within. For at least a minute he stood within fair view, waving to and fro his rudely constructed flag of peace; when Kenton, getting out of patience, called out, in a loud, gruff voice:

"Come on, you —— fool, ef you've got anything decent to say, and not stand thar all day like a grinning babboon. Come on, and don't be skeered!—we'll all hear you afore we hurt you!"

Hawley made no reply to this, but immediately advanced, with an air of boldness, to within pistol-shot of the palisades, where a conversation between him and the scouts could be easily maintained. Then drawing himself up, with what he intended should be an air of dignity, he said:

"I s'pose I can count on you to respect this flag of truce, till we finish our say and I have time to go back and report?"

"Go ahead!" said Kenton; "ef we war agwine to hurt you, you'd a been a dead man afore this!"

"You mought take my life whar I ar', that's sartin," returned Ralph; "but thar'd be an awful reckoning to come arter it, with them as would revenge me!"

"Wall, jest stop your blathering, and go ahead!" cried Seth, indignantly. "Say what you've got to say, and travel! for thar's at least a pound of lead in here that's itching most powerful to git into your carcass!"

"Fust and foremost then," said Hawley, "just allow me to say that we knows—me and the Injuns, that is—just exactly how many you count."

"Which ar' exactly nine," rejoined Kenton; "seven fighting men, a lady, and a black nigger; which I jest tell you, for fear you've made a mistake and think thar's more of us."

"And what do you s'pose your seven fighting men can do agin a hundred Injuns?"

"Lick 'em!" said Kenton.

"Eat 'em all up!" put in Wetzel.

"Swallow 'em hull, grease and all!" yelled Seth.

And these tantalizing rejoinders were followed by a general laugh of derision.

"I reckon I'm mistaken in my opinion o' you!" said Ralph.

"Reckon you is, hoss!" replied Kenton.

"Yes," pursued Hawley, "I thought, afore I come up, that it was just as like as not that some o' you mought have some sense, and not be a gineral pack of —— crazy fools!"

"Ef we war crazy fools, we'd jest invite you in to jine!" laughed Kenton. "But t'ar ahead, ef you've got any more to say! and ef not, travel back to your nigger friends, and tell 'em, ef they want to know what we're made on, to come up here and see, and not sneak off like they done at fust!"

"What I've got to say ar' just this here!" resumed the renegade, without appearing to heed the taunts of the woodsman. "We're a hundred strong at this minute, and can double or treble our numbers if they're wanted; and besides, we've completely surrounded you, so that thar arn't the least chance for you to escape, eyther by land or water; and we've all sworn, by the Great Spirit, that you shan't escape, not a single one of you, unless you comply with our terms!"

"Wall, out with 'em, and we'll jest hear what you want us to do—for you're sich a purty-looking old cub, that it's fun for us to hear you talk!"

"Afore I tell you our terms," pursued Hawley, "I want to make it cl'ar to you, that thar's not the least chance for you to get away!"

"That shows that you don't believe what you say yourself, or you wouldn't try to prove it!" rejoined Kenton.

"Fust and foremost," continued Hawley, "I've told you that we're a hundred strong—that we can call up five hundred if they're wanted—that you're completely surrounded; and now I'll tell you what we're agwine to do if you don't comply with our terms. Ef we'd make a determined assault upon this place, thar's no man living, of any sense in his head, but what would know that we could easy carry it in a short time—with no great loss nyther; but just to put the thing stronger, 'spose I allow that we can't carry it by force of arms; then all we has to do ar' just to keep it surrounded till we starve you out! D'ye understand all this?"

"Go ahead!" said Kenton; "for we're itching to know what cussed fool proposition you've got to make in place of sich almighty doings!"

"Just this here!" answered the white envoy of the enemy: "we've got nothing partikerler agin most of you, and don't want to hurt you; but you've got two persons in thar as we want—two that belongs to us as prisoners, and two that we're bound to have; and if you'll gin them up to us, we'll pledge ourselves to go away peaceable, and let you go your own way, whensomever and whar-somever you like; but if you refuses us this, we'll take you, eyther alive or dead! and them as we gets alive, we'll put through the tortures the best way as we knows how!"

"Here, Miss Bertrand," said Kenton, "jest you do the rest of the talking—for it's like it consarns you partikerly—and whatsomever you chooses to say, we'll stand to."

"But I should not like to say anything which would imperil your lives to save mine!" returned Blanche.

"Good gor-a-mighty!" chimed in Seth; "I jest hopes, Miss Blanche, you don't mean for to insult us, by 'sposing we'd desart you under any sarcumstances! Would we do sich a mean thing, Snowball?"

"Nebber, while dar's any life in us, dat's a cl'ar case, Marse Seth!" replied Duke, with a very brave air.

"That feller out thar is only lying, anyhow!" said Kenton. "He only wants to git you into his hands agin, and git you safe, and then he'd pitch into us more savage nor ever; so ef you don't want to go, jest tell him so, and talk him big, and don't be afeard of gitting us into trouble—for nothing that we or you can say will make matters any wuss."

"God forbid that I should ever fall into his hands again!" returned Blanche; "and I have already firmly resolved, if I have to choose between that and death, it shall be the latter."

Saying this, she turned to one of the loop-holes,

and addressed the renegade in a clear and distinct tone.

"I suppose, Ralph Hawley," she said, "I am one of the persons you seek?"

"Yes," he replied, "and the most valuable one, too."

"I am aware of my value," returned Blanche, "and think it much too great to be put at your disposal! Considering that I am such a prize, I must confess I am somewhat astonished that you should have permitted such a burglarious entrance, and such a heavy robbery, even after I warned you against it!"

Hawley swore three or four wicked oaths in quick succession, and declared, "if he had her back agin, he'd guard her closer than gold."

"Thank you!" responded Blanche; "but, having my freedom now, I think I prefer to retain it."

"Well, you won't—I pledge you my honor to that!" said Ralph; "you'll eyther be tuk agin, dead or alive! and so, to save you from being killed outright, I've come to tell you, that if you and your friend 'll come out and jine us peaceable, we'll go away quiet and do no damage."

"That is to say, Mr. Hawley, that if we will walk out and give ourselves up to the torture, you will let us live till we die! We are very much obliged to you, my friend and myself, but do not feel disposed just now to accept of your invitation."

"By all that's holy," returned Hawley, "I swear to you, that you at least shan't be put to the torture, and that I'll do my best through life to make myself agreeable and pleasant to you!"

"And that would be the worst kind of torture to me!" said Blanche; "and would leave the difference in favor of the stake, as the less horrible and lingering of the two. On the whole, sir, I am inclined to think you are getting very foolish, to come here and make such a proposition to us! and the sooner you retire, the sooner you will convince me that your natural senses are returning! The little band of Kentuckians, whom your great wisdom was to overthrow so disastrously, are now here with me, (all save two at least,) and are prepared to defend themselves to the last! So take my advice and retire, and withdraw your forces! for we are abundantly able to sustain a long siege, or at least long enough to be reinforced by numbers, equal, if not superior, to the most of which you boast."

This was said at a venture, for no one had the least hope of reinforcement; but it was thought best to speak with confidence, and throw out whatever hint might tend to make the enemy uncertain of the result.

"You wont agree to my terms, then?" said Hawley.

"The most we will agree to," put in Seth, angrily, "is to gin you about a minute, more or less, to take that thar ugly carcass o' yourn out o' our sight! So tramp, you brute! afore we speaks to you in the nateral language that we allers talks to sich as you and your nigger friends!"

Hawley turned his eye quickly and suspiciously toward the different loop-holes, as if to see whether or not a rifle was pointed toward him; and then springing suddenly forward, he secured his person from immediate danger, by getting the cover of the palisades between him and his foes.

This appeared to be the signal for a general assault; for instantly a large body of Indians, who had crept up to the right and left, under cover of some bushes, while this interview was taking place, sprung forward, with their wildest yells of savage rage, and discharged a volley at the different loop-holes as they ran toward the renegade.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE SIEGE.

"Merciful God!" cried Eugene, as a ball passed between him and Blanche, and buried itself in a stout timber above their heads; "that was a narrow escape for you! One inch to the left, and you would have been snatched from our protection! Back! back! for the love of God!"

"One inch to the right," said Blanche, in a somewhat agitated voice, "and you, my dear friend, would have been no longer my protector!"

"Hurray for Old Wirginy and Kaintuck!" yelled Seth; "the fight's begun in 'arnest now, and them as lives through it will see a heap o' fun!"

The scouts seemed less disturbed by the assault than might have been expected. This probably arose from their minds having been prepared for it, as an event which was certain to take place, sooner or later. With the exception of the observations we have recorded, and a few rapid orders from Kenton, spoken in a cool, firm tone, there was little said, and soon a deep and ominous silence seemed to reign within and without. This lasted but a few minutes, however; and then the Indians, having re-loaded their pieces, and found some crevices here and there between the palisades, opened a somewhat steady fire upon the block-house, which they maintained till night began to shut in the scene—the scouts now and then venturing to the different loop-holes, and returning the fire whenever the glimpse of an Indian could be seen—but neither party, as it happened, doing any damage worthy of mention.

What object the Indians had in firing at all, was not very clear; probably it was done partly for their own amusement, and partly in hope that some of their balls might find a human mark; but the grand struggle was evidently to follow during the long hours of darkness; and as our friends beheld the shades of night gradually settling around them, the stoutest heart was compelled to feel the gloom and awe of coming death creep over it.

"This may be our last night on earth!" said Blanche to Eugene, speaking in a low, solemn tone.

"There seems little hope, I must admit, except the hope that we may die together!" was the equally solemn reply.

"If I were certain it would be a quick and speedy death together," rejoined Blanche, "I could look upon my fate with a calmness I feel not now; but this uncertainty—this awful dread of again falling into the hands of those demons—seems at all times to make my very heart shrink within me! It is terrible to die so young, with so much before me worth living for!—to die here, a bloody death, afar from my friends, my body to be mutilated and left to the wild beasts of the forest!—but since I have been a prisoner—since I now know what a terrible doom will be mine if again taken—I a thousand times prefer such a death, with all its attendant horrors, to such a life of hopeless misery!—for if once again in the hands of Hawley, such precautions, I feel assured, would be taken, as would render my captivity hopeless indeed!"

"Fear not, Miss Blanche!" said Eugene, compressing his lips and speaking with a choking effort, at the same time drawing his glittering knife from its sheath and holding it up before her: "Behold! your hope is here! Take this, and keep it by you! If I live, and the fatal moment arrives when there is no other hope, my arm shall strike the blow, to free both you and me!—but if I fall before you, your own arm must be nerved to do the deed!"

"Thank you, my dear friend!" said Blanche, as her lily hand closed tightly upon the haft of the knife. "I shall breathe freer with this in my possession. And now let us stand firm, and do our duty! praying God for the best, but fully prepared for the worst."

When the gathering darkness had so deepened that objects could not be clearly distinguished at a distance, the Indians ceased their firing, and nothing more was heard from them for something like an hour—an hour of no little anxiety to our friends, shut up as they were within their narrow limits, and believing as they did that the enemy had already begun the execution of some dangerous stratagem. Stationing themselves at the different loop-holes, with their rifles and pistols loaded and carefully primed, and all their other arms ready for repelling an assault whenever it might be made, they awaited in deep silence the momentous onset, eagerly listening to every sound which might convey the faintest indication of what was going on without. That the Indians could readily scale the palisades, unseen in the deep darkness, and with little or no noise, they knew; that they would do so, unless some more advantageous plan should offer for getting at the inmates of the block-house, they believed; and therefore all stood prepared for a close assault—not without some secret dread of the fearful event, it is true—but wishing, if it must come, that it might speedily take place, and so relieve their suspense by active excitement.

For something like an hour, we say, the scouts heard nothing more of their foes, with the exception perhaps of a few trifling sounds, which gave no indication of their proceedings. The storm had by this time ceased entirely; but the heavens were still more or less vailed by clouds, and the night was thus rendered extremely dark—so much so, in fact, that no glimpse of the enemy could be caught through the different loop-holes, even when they ventured to look out, which, because of the danger of a volley being poured in upon them at any moment, was not of very frequent occurrence.

At length Kenton—who, with the swivel under his charge, so pointed as to command the door of the block-house, was peering down through one of the openings in the projection above it—suddenly started back and whispered to his nearest companions "to keep powerful quiet." Then lighting a match, and so covering it with his hands as to circumscribe the reflection and not permit of its being seen by the savages without, he noiselessly returned to the piece, bent down, and ignited the powder. There was a quick flash and a stunning report, succeeded for an instant by a deathless silence, and followed the next by several screeches and groans, and a series of the wildest and most savage of human yells of surprise, pain, and rage.

"Hurray for Old Wirginny and Kaintuck!" shouted Seth; "that thar's the way to gin it to the devils! and I hopes, Simon, the old gal sent some on 'em home to thar master!"

"She's a beauty, ar' old swivel!" cried Kenton, with a whoop. "You see the niggers war gitting thick about the door thar, and she jest told 'em not to come in; and some on 'em wont, onless they're carried! Three cheers for Old Wirginny and Kaintuck!"

Three loud, hearty cheers were accordingly given, and were commingled with the yells of the Indians and the reports of their muskets, as they, finding their near presence discovered, poured volley after volley against the block-house, the balls now and then whistling through the different apertures, and compelling our friends to exercise the greatest caution in the disposition of their persons. United to these different sounds without, were also the shrieking, floundering sounds of the frightened horses within—the whole combining to make such a horrid din as might have completely prostrated or paralyzed any nerves less strongly braced than those of our gallant borderers—who, instead of showing signs of terror, seemed now to be in their most congenial element, and continually called to their enemies in taunting tones and with tantalizing words.

"You'd better yield!" called out the voice of the renegade, amid the horrible din; "and ef you'll only yield now, as bad as things look for you, we'll let you off; but ef you don't, we'll pile you up in thar dead, or fotch you out alive afore to-morrow morning!"

"Go ahead, old bragger!" called back Seth; "jest git us ef you can; but ef you can't, don't let me see your ugly mug agin, or it'll be the last time you'll ever look on anything purty."

The Indians kept up their shouting, whooping, yelling, and firing for perhaps a half an hour—the besieged returning a few shots now and then at random—when the latter were suddenly startled by a bright flame springing up not far from the door, and which at once began to make a rapid advance to the right and left.

"It is what I feared!" said Eugene, as, by the bright light, he looked around upon the faces of the others; while the Indians, now more certain of their aim, sent quite a number of balls through the different apertures. "Here, Blanche! here!" he cried, turning to his fair companion, and perceiving that she stood in a somewhat exposed position: "Here! stoop down here! or you may be struck by some passing ball!"

"If it were to lodge in my heart or brain, Eugene," she replied, as she complied with his request, "it would save you or me the commission of a fearful deed! for there is no hope whatever of escaping from our foes, except by death!"

"Do not yet despair!" returned the other. "These flames may be easily quenched; and even if allowed their own course, it would take a long time, and much additional fuel, to burn through these stout, wet logs. See! see! even now they are being suppressed!" he added, as one of the scouts poured down a few buckets of water taken from the tank, nearly quenching the fire, but sending up a heavy volume of thick, black smoke.

"Ah! look! he is killed!" cried Blanche, in the same breath, as she saw the man reel and pitch forward, while a loud yell of triumph came up from below.

Eugene sprang to the poor fellow, as did also two or three others, and drew him back to the center of the apartment, amid the thick and almost suffocating smoke. But the words of Blanche proved too true; he was indeed already beyond mortal aid; for, while bending over the aperture to throw down the water, a ball had come up from below and passed through his forehead and brain.

The scene now became more gloomy and hopeless. The Indians, so overwhelming in force, were able to keep up a constant discharge of musketry on all sides, with only some half of their number, and so allow the other half a safe opportunity to collect, place, and fire the driest materials which could be found.

And even while the scout had been pouring water upon the flames, they had, under cover of their guns, set fire to the combustibles in other places, the flames of which now began to shoot up on three sides instead of one, once more lighting up the scene within and without, and clearly showing the besieged that, unless something providential should interfere in their favor, they might, perhaps, put off the fatal moment for a brief time, but could not ultimately escape.

Still, determined to hold out to the last—remembering it could only be death in the end, and that nothing could be gained by yielding up to despair, even if hope were lost—a part of them began to return the fire of the enemy, whenever they could get a glimpse of a dusky form, which the lurid light occasionally enabled them now to do; while one or two kept themselves busy in dashing water upon the flames.

It had now become a regular struggle in earnest—the Indians continually bringing fresh fuel, setting it on fire, and keeping up a continual discharge of guns at the different apertures—and the scouts dashing on the water, and firing back with a more certain and a more fatal aim.

This lasted till the water in the tank became completely exhausted, during which time several of the Indians had been wounded, if not killed, while only one of the whites had fallen, and the fire had been so kept under as to do no great damage. But it now became necessary to have a fresh supply of water, and two men proceeded to lower the bucket for the purpose. This they had done some three or four times, when some of the enemy, perceiving their operations, ran down the stream to where the bank permitted an easy descent to the water, and, swimming up under the projection of the block-house, suddenly seized hold of the rope and cut it, announcing their success by several triumphant whoops.

This last misfortune placed our friends in a very critical position indeed; and loud, fierce and triumphant were the yells of the savages, as they brought and threw on fresh combustibles, and beheld the flames spring upward with a crackling and roaring sound, with no means for those within to either quench them or escape their devouring tongues.

When this terrible state of affairs came to be clearly understood by the different parties, Kenton called his companions together, and said:

"Boys, we've all got to go the long journey this time, thar's no mistake about it! Thar's no git away, no how; and the Injuns, ef they keep up their infarnal work, will burn us down afore morning. But thar's one satisfaction, anyhow: They may roast us in here, but we'll die a-fighting; and the cussed brutes, whatsomever they may git, won't git our scalps. Let's gin three more cheers for old Wirginy and Kaintuck, jest to show the devils that ef we is conquered we arn't a bit skeered!"

And setting the example himself, three long, loud, and vociferous cheers were given.

"Thank God that you are right!" said Eugene to Blanche; "and that, if we have to meet death, as I believe we shall, we shall not be compelled to take our own lives!"

"And next to escape, that is what I have prayed for!" she replied. "It is very terrible, though!" she added, as the crackling flames sprung fiercely upward, on all sides but one, and filled the room with heat and smoke. "Let us commend our souls to God, and die as become those who believe in the saving virtues of Christianity! The trial is a fearful one, but it will soon be over, and our spirits will soon be beyond the troubles of time!"

[illegible] had now crouched himself down a little behind her, with his face buried in his hands, where he sat rocking himself to and fro, but no longer uttering any expression of complaint or fear. More timid than either of the others, and consequently more ready for despair, he had long since given up all hope, and, with a sort of stolid apathy, was now quietly awaiting his end.

Blanche addressed a few words to him, bidding him repeat his prayers and die with the hope of a better life; but getting no reply to her remarks, she turned to Eugene, and continued to speak in a calm, firm tone of their approaching doom.

Meanwhile the scouts, true to their characteristics, continued to load and fire their pieces, taking as careful an aim at their foes, whenever they could get a glimpse of them, as if they were not surrounded by certain destruction, and really believed that the taking of another life could save their own.

"I don't mind dying a great deal," said Seth, as he rammed home another ball, "kase it's a thing as has got to come to all o' us humans sometime; but I think ef I could jest git another sight of that thar Hawley, and jest put a ball into him, I'd go off an amazing heap easier like. Thar! thar!" he added, hurriedly, and with considerable agitation, as he glanced through one of the apertures; and throwing out his ramrod with a sudden jerk, he proceeded to prime his piece with a careless waste of powder.

"What is it, Seth? what d'ye see now?" inquired Wetzel.

"Hush, boys! hush!" returned the boatman, in a somewhat agitated voice, as he quickly brought his piece to his shoulder, and took a steady sight along the barrel.

The next moment there was a sharp crack, and a wild yell from without; and Seth, throwing down his rifle, began to dance around the room, exclaiming:

"I've done it, boys! I've done it! and now I'm ready to die! I don't want to shoot no more! Look thar! look thar! See! They're carrying off thar white hound, all the wuss for a leetle hole in his gizzard!"

As the scouts all looked in the direction indicated by Seth, they saw indeed what afforded them no little gratification; for just beyond the palisades, in the clear light of the roaring flames, they beheld some three or four Indians, bearing back the body of Ralph Hawley to the surrounding darkness. He had ventured from his concealment into the fire-light, to get a better view of the fiendish work he had aided to accomplish; and that moment had proved the most unfortunate of his life; for the keen eye of the boatman had perceived him, and his unerring aim had lodged a ball in his breast, which would certainly prove mortal in a few hours at the most.

But while our friends stood looking, they were suddenly astonished by another event, which did more to unnerve them than all the dangers by which they had been surrounded; for suddenly they heard several wild shouts, accompanied by a discharge of firearms, and beheld the savages drop their human burden and fly swiftly across the open space, followed by several others, all uttering cries of alarm and terror.

"Good God!" exclaimed Kenton; "what can that thar mean?"

The words were scarcely uttered, when a heavy body of mounted whites dashed suddenly into view, poured in through the now open gate, and began a fierce and furious onslaught upon all the savages who were thus caught within the enclosure of the palisades.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

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THE HAPPY TIME.

A REVERIE.

BY MARY W. STANLEY GIBSON.

I can see it all, as I sit here alone. The years drop from me like a cloak, and I am no more the gray-haired invalid, sitting in my arm-chair beside the fire and shivering at every draught of air, or every noise in the passage outside. I am a young and happy girl of twenty-one, and the sunshine of a bright May morning is all around me. Let me think of it—let me speak of it. There may be many whose eyes will fall upon this page, to whom it will do no harm to join hands with me, while I go back for a time, and gaze at this bright memory of my youth.

There are some especial days in the life of every man and woman, I suppose, when Nature seems to sympathize with her children, and create, as it were, a glory of loveliness, expressly for them, of all others, to be happy in. It was such a day to me—that 24th of May. The air just tempered with a dash of coolness that made the blood bound quietly through my veins—the sun shining gloriously in a sky of unclouded blue—a faint breeze stirring the young leaves upon the trees, and making the dew-drops tremble on the slender blades of grass—ah, what was it not worth to be young and happy and beloved, on such a morning as that! I leaned out of my chamber window in the little, red farm-house, and looked out upon the scene with a swelling heart. The sunlight fell pleasantly on the grove behind the house, and its walks and forest aisles were checkered with light and shade, far as the eye could reach. The hills beyond the village road were blue and misty in the distance. I saw, at the next house, that they were getting ready for church. I saw a carriage standing before our own door, while "Fanny," the little bay mare, was drinking at the well, and the cattle waited patiently behind her, till she had done. The house-dog sat soberly on his haunches, half way between the house and the gate, watching two white geese, who sailed to and fro on the little pond, with a small yellow gosling between them. All was still and peaceful. From the valley came the ringing of the first church bell—the crows were cawing in the green recesses of the wood—the birds were singing among the lilacs—these were all the sounds that were abroad, in the blessed quiet of that happy Sabbath morning, in the land which lies beyond the sea.

He was coming to me that day. Is there any one who has forgotten the days of youth enough to ask who "*he*" was? I left my chamber and went down into the parlor. It was the parlor of a farm-house, with an uncarpeted floor, and unpapered walls; with plain white muslin curtains at the windows, and a white damask cloth upon the table; yet how pretty it looked! The windows were all open—the soft curtains swaying gently in the breeze, and beyond them a thicket of roses, that thrust their blossoms and sent their fragrance into the very room. The sunshine made great blocks and patches on the floor of warm, mellow light. On my writing-desk was a beautiful bouquet of wild flowers, gathered in the grove by my own hand—roses were blooming on the mantel-piece, [illegible] among the books and pictures on the table. There was no one to disturb me, yet I was almost sad—because I was so happy. I sat down before my desk, scribbled a few lines on a sheet of blank manuscript before me, and throwing the pen aside, took up a miniature that was always lying there, and opened it. I have it here beside me now. It is a noble face. High forehead, sweet mouth, melting blue eyes, with a world of melancholy in their depths, and waving, clustering, golden hair—they are all here, and Time has never touched this picture, though we laid the original in the dust long, long ago. I gazed on it that morning with a heart too full for words, and pressing it to my lips, closed it, as the sudden roll of a carriage, and the mingling of glad voices in the yard told me that my friends had come.

I went out to meet them. My gay cousin Lucia had joined them as the carriage passed the door of her father's house, and waved her gipsey hat over her head, as she caught sight of me. Then came a silent, handsome young minister, offering his hand to help her in alighting, and blushing like a girl at the nonsense she was uttering. And then—last of all—the tall, elegant form I had been looking for—and Arthur was beside me!

"There was nothing to the seeming in our interchange of hands,"

yet how much *we* felt it! Without speaking, all was made plain between us. There were obstacles in the way of our love, obstacles which might never be removed, and which bade fair to separate us forever—yet with even that knowledge, what a happy moment it was! We went into the little parlor—we turned over the pictures, we talked gaily with our two friends who were wild with the beauty of the day; yet all the time we felt, and our stolen glances showed it, that we longed for one moment to be alone—and to speak freely, heart to heart. The time came, but not till the day was done and the sun was setting. We left the little grove where we had been searching after May-flowers before the others, and entered the house. I filled a glass with water, placed my bouquet in it, and took it to the writing-desk. I saw him reading, as I did so, the lines which I had written that morning, before he came:—

"If it were all my spirit asked,
To bask in the light of thy smiling eyes,
When, weary, worn and overtasked,
It turns from the glare that fades and dies—
Say, wouldst thou bid them still beam on,
To cheer me in each stern endeavor,
Or, when the light of hope had gone,
Would they too change, and change forever?"

I looked up in his face, and the eyes of which I had written, were full of tears. He opened his arms, and as I sprang towards him and laid my head upon his breast, our lips met for the first time. We stood in silence, hearing our own hearts beat, yet saying nothing. The sun sank slowly in the west, and Lucia, with her hands full of flowers, came singing from the grove, leaning on her lover's arm. There never was a moment like that, in life, for me, or for him again!

Do you ask me why I do not go on? Have I not said enough—too much, already? Why should I speak of the change that came to us, as it comes to all, in this weary world of ours. It is enough that the bright day had its end, that we were happy to the last, in it. No heart ever yet loved as truly and passionately as ours loved at that moment, that cannot guess the rest—the parting—the estrangement—the forgetfulness—and last of all, the green grave in the churchyard, and the unquiet spirit stilled forever.

Ah, how the dream has faded! The May sunshine has fled, and the gay young girl has danced away with it. I cower once more over my fire, and turn from the pages of my book, to look out upon the murky sky and the driving rain, and sigh as I think how long ago it all was! And only smile, when I remember that at best it cannot be much longer that I must endure this weary exile. Soon, oh Arthur—lost, but not forgotten—shall I follow where thou art gone—to a country where no barriers can come between us, to a home where no love can be sinful, and to a land where it is always May.

"RESERVED" HUSBANDS.

BY AUGUSTA MOORE.

What is more trying—more provoking, in fact—when you are nearly dying to get at your husband's sentiments upon any particular subject, than to have him remain as silent and impracticable as a dead man in his coffin.

You may question him and coax him, you may reason with him, you may entreat of him to open his heart to you just this once; you may even weep before him, and tell him that you cannot believe he has much regard for you if he persists in shutting you out from his confidence; it is all as nothing, you can't start him a peg, if he don't choose to be communicative. Oh! dear me! how trying it *is*.

Then, again, when your husband has done wrong, and he knows it, and knows that you know it; and when you feel that you can never be happy again until he repents and reforms, and you try to converse with him about it; to touch his feelings, and induce him to express regret, and a resolution of amendment, you might as well talk to a bed-post and expect it to answer you. There the immovable being sits, or stands, or lies, and his face never changes, nor can you read a thought in his eyes. He is not angry, perhaps; perhaps he is a man who "never gets angry at his friends," but neither is he pleased, nor interested. Your words go in at one of his ears and out at the other, making no more impression than if they were not forced with pain out from your aching heart.

Truly it is encouraging talking to "silent partners"; truly it is refreshing to pour out all your joys and sorrows into the ears of a man who makes no return of confidence; truly it is delightful to abide always, or most of the time, on the windowless outside of the heart of one's own husband, or one's friend, who is so near and dear, that one never thought of refusing to him the liberty of one's soul in all its moods, even the most sacred. Oh! these proud, self-willed, and silent men. They are really *terrible!* Who wouldn't rather dwell in a region where now and then a tornado swept the land than in one cursed by perpetual silence?

He whose heart is kind, and pure, and true, needs not to fear to speak freely into the ears of those who love him. How, then, *can* a woman who is never able to gain a view into the heart of him upon whose breast her head is pillowed, escape the haunting and tormenting fear that the reason why her husband will not freely talk with her is because he fears to do so lest he convict himself of secret evil towards her? If faith to her were written all over the walls of his soul, (as over hers are written faith and love to him,) would he not *rejoice* to throw it open for her inspection? Most certainly he would. Though there are secrets of other people, which neither husband nor wife have any right to repeat to each other, yet between them, as between lovers, there should be perfect confidence as far as matters partaining to each other, or affecting each other's interest, are concerned. Without this free and loving interchange of thought, feeling, and sentiment, there *may* be the wild and fleeting pleasure of passion, but there can be no trustful, peaceful love.

When you look for a husband, ladies, cast away the idle notion that a silent man is sure to be a wise one. That is the rock on which many split, so do not you; but seek for a man cheerful, genial, open-hearted; whose tongue runs frankly, sensibly, kindly, and of whose real feelings and thoughts you may have some way of judging. Thus you may hope always to know how you stand with your husband, and to take some comfort talking with him.

ON TASTE.

Agreeable emotions and sensations may be divided into three orders; those of pleasure, which refer to the senses;—those of harmony, which refer to the mind;—and those of happiness, which are the natural result of a union between harmony and pleasure: the former being exercised in virtue—the latter in temperance. Harmony is principally enjoyed by those men, who possess, what has analogically been termed, taste;—"that universal sense of beauty, which every man, in some degree, possesses, rendered more exquisite by genius, and more correct by cultivation." It is very singular that the disposition of the moral powers is always similar to that of the imagination:—that those, who are most inclined to admire prodigious and sublime objects in the natural world, are also most inclined to applaud examples of fortitude and heroic virtue in the moral;—while those, who are charmed rather with the delicacy and sweetness of colors, forms, and sounds, never fail in like manner to yield the preference to the softer scenes of virtue and the sympathies of a domestic life. Exciting a love of true glory and an admiration of every nobler virtue, Taste exalts the affections, and purifies our passions;—clothes a private life in white, and a public one in purple. Adding a new feature, as it were, to the pomp, the bloom, and the exuberance of nature, it enables the mind to illumine what is dark, and to color what is faded;—giving a lighter yellow to the topaz, a more celestial blue to the sapphire, and a deeper crimson to the ruby, it imparts a higher brilliance to the diamond, and a more transparent purple to the amethyst.

Bearing a price which only the heart and the imaginatiou can estimate, and being the mother of a thousand chaste desires, and a thousand secret hopes, taste strews flowers in the paths of literature and science; and breathing inexpressive sounds, and picturing celestial forms, qualifies the hour of sorrow, by inducing that secret sense of cheerfulness, which, in its operation,—

Refines the soft, and swells the strong;
And joining nature's general song,
Through many a varying tone unfolds
The harmony of human souls.

VIEW OF LIFE.

Those are the wisest and happiest who can pass through life as a play; who, without making a farce of it, and turning every thing into ridicule—or running into the opposite extreme of tragedy—consider the whole period from the cradle to the coffin as a well-bred comedy, and maintain a cheerful smile to the last scene. For what is happiness but a will-o'-the-wisp, a delusion, a *terra incognita*, in pursuit of which thousands are tempted out of the harbor of tranquillity, to be tossed about as the sport of the winds of passion and the waves of disappointment, to be wrecked at last on the rocks of despair, unless they are provided with the sheet anchor of religion that can hold in all weathers?

PROSPERITY is no just scale; adversity is the only balance to weigh friends.

THE RIVER'S BANK.

BY FRANK LEE BENEDICT.

So many untold years have passed,
As birds with bright wings flee,
Since we beside that river's edge
Sat down in childish glee.
The day was beautiful and calm,
We happy as the day,
The very waters seemed to laugh
Like children in their play.

You sat and told me fairy tales,
And both believed them true,
You from your faith in all things bright,
I from my trust in you.
You told me that in after years
We'd dwell beside that stream,
And all the while the waters laughed,
So pleasant was the dream.

I asked you if an elfin queen
Had made your eyes so blue—
And then the waters louder laughed,
As if they thought it true.
The sunlight played amid your hair—
It loved you as its child—
And if I had a childish pain,
I lost it when you smiled.

We launched our barks upon the waves,
And marked them dance and shine;
Yours safely gained the other shore—
The waters buried mine!
Your face was like an angel's then,
Its look has scarcely changed,
You dwell beside that river yet
While I afar have ranged.

You might believe in fairies still,
Your life has been so fair—
Some vestal nun serenely calm
Might have the look you wear.
The hopes which blossom o'er your heart,
Are like the flowers of yore—
You still fling roses on the tide,
And still they gain the shore!

The laughing glee of that bright day
Departed from me long,
Perchance those dreaming waters keep
The echo of its song.
Ah no! the throbbing of my heart
Would hush its pleasant tone,
To hear the summer music there
Is left for you alone.

THE THREE BOOK-KEEPERS

AND THEIR WIVES.

BY GEO. F. MAY ELD.

Three young ladies, one afternoon, in the winter of 1856, were in their chamber in a genteel house in Fourteenth street, engaged in making their toilet, preparatory for a night at the opera. They were going to see and be seen. Two of these fair damsels were sisters, born and bred in this city: the other was a cousin, (Cousin Nan, they called her,) who had first opened her eyes among the green hills of Vermont, and lived in rural felicity until within a year or two, when she came to New York to "finish her education," in the house of her uncle William, who was her guardian, she being an orphan. Nan was a blonde beauty—not absolutely handsome either, but her bright gray eyes beamed with intelligence and kindness; and added to that her rosy cheeks, nice teeth, and frank, cheerful expression of the mouth, and you will admit that her appearance was prepossessing. Her cousins, who were rather *petite*, though well-shaped beauties, with blue eyes and dark hair, said she was too tall; but the fact was, that they would have parted with half their ringlets, (and the mention of *that* would have made their hairdresser's eyes shine, for they had any quantity of them,) to have been as large as Nan, notwithstanding she weighed a hundred and forty, and wore number fives.

"I tell you, Soph," said one of the sisters, who was confining the other's mass of curls under a band of pearls, "it is best, for several reasons, that we should all be married on the same day; isn't it, Nan?"

"Suit yourselves and you will suit me," replied Nan, who stood before a glass, *en deshabille*; her full, ripe bust entirely vailed by a cloud of auburn hair which she was combing. So the girls agreed that their approaching union to the men of their choice should be a triple wedding. Charlotte assisted Sophy in arranging her jewels in her ringlets, before putting on her own dress; and manifestly the purest affection existed between the two sisters. It was evident, too, that they loved cousin Nan almost as much as they did each other. Yet no two of the young ladies were at all alike in their desires and aspirations.

"Tell the truth, Nan," said Sophy, gayly, as she hooked up her richly-flounced, pearl-colored silk, "and own up, that you wish that you and your prim little Mr. Wallis were more nearly of a size; such a man, now, as mine? What a splendid fellow Charley is, to be sure! He has a form for a brigadier-general. What a shame that he is only a book-keeper!"

"Heigho," sighed Charlotte, "we are in the same boat together: we have all got book-keepers. One can't have everything that one wants! I wish George had a larger salary. How much is Charley paid by the bank?"

"Two thousand dollars a year," replied Sophy, "and how we are going to live on that, I confess I don't know. How much does George get in the insurance office?"

"Two thousand five hundred dollars a year, and five hundred dollars as a present on the annual dividend day," answered Charlotte, who was in the act, just then, of putting 'just the least mite in the world' of pearl-powder on her neck and arms. "How much does Wallis have, Nan?"

"I never asked him," replied their cousin. The sisters exclaimed with astonishment, and Charlotte really chided her for her apparent indifference. Nancy rejoined, with a smile, that she had sufficient confidence in Mr. Wallis's judgment and affection for her, to believe that he would not marry unless he had ample means to support her respectably.

"Well, you *are* a ninny!" exclaimed Lotty, in obvious pity for her simplicity.

"Any one might know that you were from *Varmount!*" cried Sophy, mockingly, and yet with good humor.

"I hope so," retorted Nan, laughingly; and added, "I know one thing, that my little man, as you call him (though he weighs as much as both of you put together), is as rich as *I* am; for all I have got in the world is my clothes, and a few hundred dollars in money—if it hasn't been all spent for my music, drawing, &c."

"And yet you never seem to care about it!" said Charlotte.

"Oh, she is as easy as an old shoe!" said Sophy, smiling, and sitting down at her little writing-desk to superscribe a note. Then ensued some talk about their future prospects in life, and how they would like to live if they could, &c. Charlotte wanted that her husband should amass wealth, and be called one of the most substantial citizens—in short, another Astor.

Sophy's ambition was to be the pink of fashion, the cynosure of all eyes, a leader of the beau monde. A magnificent mansion in the Fifth Avenue, a splendid carriage and equipage, routes, dinners, receptions, and all that sort of thing, were the desire of her heart, and she declared that she should never be contented without them.

Nan said that, for her part, she cared neither for power nor riches. She was certainly averse to privations, but she did not aspire above her present sphere, and its attendant comforts, in the middle rank of society. With these, and a good husband, and both in good health, she should be content to go straight through life, without any of the "brilliant variations" alluded to by Sophy.

"What a humdrum, Muggins' existence that would be!" exclaimed Sophy, scornfully.

"Yet, after all, Miss Simplicity Prim here may be richer ultimately than either of us, Soph," said Charlotte, thoughtfully. "We have nothing but *expectations*, and they may turn out to be but milkmaid's chickens. I'm sure *I* don't count much upon them."

Sophy deigned no other reply than a toss of her pretty head.

"If *I* am to be the rich one," cried Nan, laughing, as she arranged her bouquet, "you both shall share my fortune with me. I promise you, (and I think I am entirely safe upon it,) five thousand dollars each when I am worth twenty thousand."

"That's no more than I would do by *you*, my dear Nan!" said Sophy.

"You sometimes tell me, Soph, that I am not very generous, but I am sure that I can *promise* cousin Nan as much as you," cried Lotty.

"You shall have my note for the amount, Nan," said Sophy, smiling; and writing very glibly upon a sheet of embossed note-paper, she laid down her pen in a minute, and read the following form of agreement or joint-note:

"We the undersigned, Charlotte Aiken, Sophia L. Aiken, (daughters of William V. Aiken, of the city of New York,) and Nancy Ingersoll, of Burlington, Vt., all spinsters, severally and mutually agree and contract hereby, that if either of us, or her husband during her life, shall become in possession and ownership of property, real or personal, of the value of twenty thousand dollars, or upwards, she shall pay to the other two parties to this contract, the sum of five thousand dollars each, in money, or its equivalent in real estate or stocks."

The girls had to laugh at this, of course.

"But what if the rich husband, (crabbed fellow!) should utterly refuse to comply with your agreement?" said Nan.

"That would dishonor his wife and should entitle her to a divorce," rejoined Charlotte, smiling.

"I'll fix that," said Sophy; "just you wait a moment. What's the use of having a lawyer for a father, if you can't fill up a legal document!"

And resuming her pen, she made the following addendum to her writing:—

"Provided, nevertheless, that if by reason of action, or want of action, in the premises by her husband, after he or she shall have attained to said property of twenty thousand dollars, she shall be prevented from making the payments then due to the other two parties to this contract, as herein stipulated, it is hereby agreed that she shall be absolved from the duty of making this payment, and *also from all duty to the husband thus dishonoring her*: and both this contract and her marital responsibility shall be thereby rendered null and void."

There was another hearty laugh as she read this aloud, and Nan said it would be a good joke to show it to their beaux, (when they called to take them to the opera,) and insist upon their consent to it upon the spot, on pain of being sacked.

"Certainly they shall, and put it down in black and white, under their own signatures!" exclaimed Sophy, resolutely. "And let me tell you, I am not joking. I never was more serious in my life. This is what a sea-captain calls having an anchor to the windward. This agreement is perfectly fair. Neither of us has any prospect now of ever being worth as much as this calls for, and I am sure our intended husbands are no better off than we are. Come, Lotty, put your name to this: you are the oldest."

Charlotte thought a moment, and then with a tremulous hand took the pen and signed the paper. Sophy and Nan did the same. Two duplicates were made; and by that time, it was nearly dark, and dinner was about ready. Descending to the brilliantly-lighted parlor, they found their three lovers awaiting them. Charles Augustus Draper, Sophy's beau, was what is called a fine-looking young man. He was tall, full-chested and full-whiskered. His look was a little sensual, but his features were regular, his eyes black and piercing, and his expression very creditable to manhood in general. It seemed queer that he should be "only a book-keeper."

George Ellison, Lotty's sweetheart, was neither tall nor short, nor thick nor thin, but a very sharp-faced, gray-eyed man, with a shrewd, business look, and a certain want of ease in his manner, not at all perceptible in the insurance office. The other book-keeper present was a short, thick-set, but scrupulously smooth, neat, nice-looking gentleman, answering to the name of Jacob Wallis. He had hazel eyes, a faultless set of teeth, and his rosy cheeks had dimples in them. Mr. Aiken was detained by a law case, and was to meet them at the opera. They had a high time at dinner, and a glass of wine with it. When the gentlemen took to their cigars, the young ladies withdrew, but soon re-appeared, and in great glee produced the documents which Sophy, as we have said, had drawn up. A clause had been added in the meantime, for the gentlemen to sign, binding themselves to respect the contract, on pain of abandonment. This was all nonsense, of course, but it afforded food for merriment; and as the girls vowed they would not fix the day for their marriage until they had signed these papers, Wallis, Ellison and Draper all put their names to it, and it was sealed with—we don't know how many kisses. Then it was agreed that the triple wedding should come off (with Mr. Aiken's approval) in five weeks from that day.

When the time came around, the marriages were duly solemnized, and the lovers were made happy. Charlotte and her cousin, and their spouses, had concluded to reside with Mr. Aiken; but Sophy, thinking it a deal finer and more genteel, went to housekeeping. At first she had thought she would be content with a house of $800 or $900 rent; but on inquiry, neither she nor her husband could be satisfied with anything short of a mansion for which they had to pay $1,200 a year. Then their furniture cost all of $3,000, and was hardly decent, she said, at that. The bank directors had liberally increased Charles's salary to $2,500 at the time of his marriage, but he had to borrow money, notwithstanding, upon a mortgage of his furniture, and his expensive way of living kept him short and embarrassed pecuniarily all the time. Husbands are very apt to lay all the blame of excessive household expenditures to their wives, and this was the case with Charles Draper. As a matter of course, he got cross, and it led to numerous matrimonial tempests in a tea-pot, so that, with all her "grandeur," Sophy was not so *very* happy after all. Her sister Charlotte was not at all extravagant, and she and her husband managed to live very well within his income of $3,000 per annum; but she longed to be rich, and envied those who had the reputation of being wealthy.

Nan was the only really contented and entirely happy wife of the lot, and her bliss continued unclouded until the following autumn, when a sad bereavement occurred to her and the sisters. Mr. Aiken, their father, was one of the first to feel the great blow inflicted by the astounding failure of the Ohio Life and Trust Company in the fall of 1857. The little that he had was invested in that rotten concern. The shock literally killed him. It was said that he died of heart disease. Perhaps it was apoplexy, for physicians don't know everything, and it was as easy for them to say one thing as another. At any rate, he lived an hour after he was stricken. After his funeral and interment, his bereaved family could hardly realize that he was dead. His estate was insolvent, and his home became the property of its creditors. In the meantime, the terrible financial panic, from which we are now feebly recovering, shook the mercantile world as an earthquake convulsed the doomed cities of Pompei and Herculaneum. The largest establishments, the proudest names, the most towering fabrics built upon the credit system during twenty years of extraordinary business prosperity, were the first to topple and fall, carrying with them numerous dependent structures, and crushing in their descent, thousands of small houses around them. Wall street, the money-focus of the larger share of the capital of the country, was palsied. The Bank and Insurance Office (being small institutions) in which Draper and Ellison, the husbands of the two sisters, worked, were affected by the crash. The great firm of which Jacob Wallis was the book-keeper, failed irremediably, and he also, like his two brothers-in-law, was thrown out of business. What was to be done? In ordinarily dull times they could all have found new employment readily, for they were desirable men; but now everything was flat, with no prospect of any *let up* for a year at least.

Charles and Sophy were in great distress of mind. They had been living so very genteel, and it required so much money! George was too shrewd a man to lend them anything, but they borrowed of Jacob enough to keep the wheels a-going for a month longer. In the meantime, both Ellison and Wallis had to cast about for a change of residence. Before they had succeeded, Sophy's husband was declared a bankrupt, the mortgage upon his furniture was foreclosed, and his fast horse was seized by the sheriff. It was a mean way to live, they thought, but he and Sophy took furnished rooms in a boarding-house in Tenth street, where they paid only (they bragged confidentially to the Ellisons and Wallises) twenty-eight dollars a week for themselves and servant, gas and fire included.

"Of course we couldn't live for any less if we should try ever so hard!" said Sophy.

"Couldn't you do without *Bridget?*" Charlotte ventured to suggest.

"Oh, no—of course not!" exclaimed Sophy. "What should I do without Biddy?"

But when Charlotte, with her husband, went to board in Waverly Place, *she* kept no girl. Ellison paid only fifteen dollars a week. Sophy pitied them, but her sister managed to survive it, though she thought herself entitled to a vast deal of credit for her self-denial in living upon a third floor.

Their cousin, Mrs. Wallis, (the good, easy Nan,) both surprised and mortified the sisters by the course which she took in this emergency, and Sophy was actually ashamed of her.

"You are earning nothing, my dear husband, I know," said Nancy to him one day, before they left their comfortable quarters in Mr. Aiken's house, where they had passed so many happy hours: "but you have other resources? Do not fear to tell me the worst, and I will make my calculations accordingly."

He replied that he had an income from his savings, say about six hundred dollars a year.

"Very well, my dear," rejoined Nan, cheerfully, "it is a rather small pattern, certainly; but I will cut my coat according to my cloth. We will live within our means."

"Impossible! impossible!" he exclaimed. "You are a darling, Nan, to think of it; but it is impossible. We can't live in New York for anything like it!"

"We *can*, Jacob, if you will leave it with me to make the arrangement."

"Of course, I will," he rejoined. "I will do anything you say."

The result was that Mrs. Wallis hired a neatly though plainly furnished parlor, and an unfurnished bed-room adjoining, located in a respectable neighborhood, for six dollars a week, fuel and gas-light, and the usual service from the landlady's chambermaid, in keeping the fire and room in order, included. After she had furnished her bed-room to her own liking, and put the parlor in nice trim, she took her husband thither, and announced it as their future home. Really it was not so comfortless a place after all! The Croton was in one corner, with a nice marble sink; the grate was a handsome one; the sun shone pleasantly through two front windows, and from them there was a view of a park, or parade-ground.

"And all this," said Jacob, "for six dollars a week!"

Nan got him to accompany her to a store, where she selected sundry and divers articles in the line of kitchen utensils, dishes, etc. Jacob footed the bill—$6,50, and his wife directed where they should be sent. Then they went to the grocer's, and Jacob footed another little bill there, for articles that were to be sent home to them. At night they had a cheerful time putting these house-keeping matters in their proper places. Then Jacob set the table, and Nancy made a nice pot of tea, cut up a loaf of bread, and put on a tidy little plate of sparkling yellow butter. It was a mighty frugal meal, and very much like camp-life, Jacob said; but how they both enjoyed it! Never before had plain bread and butter tasted so delicious. Jacob was prouder of his buxom wife than ever. It was agreed that he should get a small household account-book, and enter therein all their expenses from day to day. He did so, and it was wonderful to him at how cheap a rate they lived. Their food (and they had enough of the plain and substantial) did not cost them over $2,50 a week. We have seen his account-book, and can prove what we say, oh, ye young housekeepers, who have been boasting through the columns of some of the morning papers that you live upon as little as fifteen dollars per week! Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Wallis's expenses for housekeeping (rent and everything included) did not exceed at any time, last winter, ten dollars per week. Yet they lived comfortably and happily, and with no sacrifice of their "respectability."

But with the spring of 1858 another change awaited them. In his youth Jacob had "served his time" with a stationer, a rich old bachelor, who had no one to love and no one to love him. Jacob had worked like a slave for him, but had been poorly paid. The old man had promised to set him up in business, but did not do it, and Jacob "had gone away sorrowful," and a little indignant, to other pursuits. Ten or twelve years had elapsed, and in the meantime he had seldom seen his old employer, and supposed himself to be almost forgotten by him. But he was mistaken. Thomas Stark had thought of him often, and was cognizant of his present trials and mode of life. Probably Jacob's heroic and sensible course under his misfortunes caused the old man to think more of him, and of his own injustice, for when he died (it was in March, 1858) a clause was found in his will, leaving thirty thousand dollars to his former apprentice, Jacob Wallis! The rest of his wealth was bequeathed to various charitable institutions, in this State and New Hampshire, where he was born.

It is impossible to describe the astonishment of Jacob and his wife, when they heard of this windfall.

"I little thought," exclaimed Nan, with sparkling eyes, "of such a thing as this coming to pass, when half in jest, half in earnest, I made that foolish contract with Lotty Ellison and Sophy Draper! What a pleasure it will be to fulfill it!"

"Tut, tut!" said Jacob, "that was only a joke! You don't mean to say that you want me to pay them $5,000 apiece, on the strength of all that nonsense!"

"But I do, though," replied Nan, archly, "and you will do it too, or lose me!"

"Stuff!" ejaculated her husband. But Nan was in earnest, and she soon convinced him of it.

"Do you mean to say," he cried, with some warmth, "that if I refuse to fulfill that preposterously absurd contract, that you will leave my bed and board?"

"Certainly I do," replied Nan, coloring with excitement, and yet very resolutely. "I voluntarily entered into that agreement with that condition, and your own name, too, is affixed to it. I wouldn't be so mean as to evade it."

"Very well, madam," iterated Jacob through his teeth, and buttoning his coat together with much emphasis. "Then go you must, for I—I won't be made a fool of!" And he went out. Nancy was as generous as the sun itself, and detested meanness with all her soul. The more she reflected upon the fallen estate of her cousins, whom she loved, the more she resolved that they should share her good fortune with her. She was surprised and grieved that her husband should not feel in the same way; but more than this, she was piqued at his pretended willingness to part with her rather than pay the money; and she determined to put him to the test before long.

Ere many days had elapsed, Jacob Wallis was in possession of his easily-gotten wealth, and Nan again appealed to his sense of honor to fulfill her pledge, but in vain. In the meantime they had moved into his benefactor's late residence. One night Jacob went home, and found no wife. Upon the table, in his study, lay a note from her, bidding him farewell forever, and assigning as a reason her resolve to comply as far as was in her power with the contract which she made with her cousins.

"Pshaw!" said Jacob to himself, "she will be along to-morrow!" and he sat down alone to his tea, with no one but the maid to wait upon him. He resolved, however, not to appear to care a tinker's whistle. It was lonesome though. Never mind; wasn't he rich? Of course he must be happy. So after tea he went into the parlor and whistled, and sung, and with his feet in his slippers, smoked a cigar, quite jauntily. Still, it *was* rather solitary! He was naturally a talkative, domestic man, but there was nobody to talk to! Well, he would talk to himself. His thoughts turning naturally to his wife, (could he never forget that unfeeling woman?) he spoke of her; first to condemn her rashness, and then to praise her virtues; and this vein being a rich one, he stuck to it for a long time; uttering his cogitations aloud. "But that foolish contract with the Aiken girls? Well, after all, it was a point of honor in Nancy, and an honorable thing, too, with her to keep her word. He must confess, that in the abstract her principle was the right one. Yes, certainly, she was a noble woman, a magnificent woman! And the girls needed the money, never so badly as now. They had been kind to Nan before she was married, and it was only proper gratitude in her to remember it. And shall I lose such a splendid creature, for a paltry ten thousand, when I shall have twenty left? No, by Jove! rather let the whole go!"

"Then I come!" cried Nan; and running out of the library where she had secreted herself, (and greatly to her amusement had heard nearly all his pathetic soliloquy,) she put her lovely arms around his neck and kissed him again and again, saying—"You good soul, you! now that we are of one mind, and my honor's safe, I never more will leave your bed and board, Jacob!" With that she laughed heartily, and her husband was fain to join her.

"Still, I'll keep my word!" said he, resolutely. "I won't pay them!"

"But you will let *me* do it, honey!" cried Nancy, chucking him under the chin.

"That's so!" said Jacob, smiling.

The next day the two sisters called upon Mrs. Wallis, by special invitation. Her husband was absent, but they sat down to a lunch together. Upon reversing their plates, what was Charlotte's and Sophy's astonishment to find two checks, each for $5,000, payable to their order.

Of course there was any amount of exclamation, and deprecation, but the checks were not rejected.

Since then the gentlemen have all got into good business, and their families are living comfortably, as they should.

THE TRANSFORMED HOME.

BY GEORGIANNA HERBERT.

In the city there is a large, white stone house, which, a few years since, presented a dreary aspect to the passer-by. Its windows were dirty and curtained by cobwebs; its front steps were falling into ruins; its blinds were falling off, or rusted together and faded by the weather. Altogether the place was forlorn to look upon.

And yet the house was a subject of much curiosity, if not interest. At almost any time during the day or evening the passer-by was liable to be entertained by the spectacle of an eruption of babies from the upper or under door at the front of the house. The steps were high, and the front and principle door of the house was at the top of them; but there was another, though an invisible one, beneath the stoop. Out at one door and in at the other the tiny troop would swarm. The chief peculiarity in their appearance was that they were mostly "in the nude state."

This exhibition was continued daily for several years, and then occasionally for several more years. To strangers the sight caused unqualified amazement, for who ever could reside in such a neighborhood could not be a pauper, unable to clothe his children; if he was such, why did not the city clothe them? The residents of the place, however, understood the matter. The owner of that house had in his youth become attached to a beautiful girl, and without considering whether her beauty was anything more than of the person, he married her. One day, during the honeymoon, too, when he returned from his office to his beautiful and costly mansion, he found his bride lying insensible upon the floor of her chamber. In alarm and distress he lifted her to her couch, and was about to ring for assistance, when it struck him that she did not look pale as women do when they faint. At the same instant he perceived the odor of her breath, and the truth flashed stunningly upon him—his beautiful Alice was *drunk!* Ugly word! but, alas! with all its ugliness, a word of truth.

And this was the beginning of the husband's sorrows. Neither entreaties nor upbraidings were of any avail. Alice told her husband that she had always loved to drink, that she *enjoyed* being drunk—that she should never reform.

Poor Owen bowed like a bulrush to this trouble. In vain did his friends advise him to part from the unworthy being who was breaking his generous and affectionate heart. He loved her still, and could not summon resolution to separate from her. When she was sober she was still as attractive as ever; and for several years she would have long intervals of sobriety. Then she would visit and give grand parties, and Owen, poor fellow! felt proud of the attention and admiration that she commanded. But soon the relapse would come, and his pride turned to grievous mortification and grief.

As time passed, everything in and about the house went to ruin. No servant would remain with "such a beast of a mistress;" and she was indifferent to everything but her drink. Children came rapidly, sometimes two at a time. Owen had degenerated, as one always must while living with and loving a vicious person. He had lost his own respect and the respect of his acquaintances; but still he persisted in keeping to his intemperate wife. A singular scene that great, comfortless house presented. Rich carpets covered with dust and dirt; costly furniture ornamented with all manner of half-worn and whole-soiled garments; elegant hair-cloth rocking-chairs in the shed, holding tubs or greasy dishes; heaps of unwashed china and glass on tables, in closets, and smashed upon the floors. Oh! what a scene! All the meals were, at last, sent in from a hotel or eating-house. The number of children increased until there were ten. They took care of themselves—as for the infants, they could usually help themselves to nature's nourishment, as the floor was their mother's favorite resting-place. It was not because there was any lack of clothing, fine and nice, that the children went naked, but because they could not get into it. They had no one to help them dress. They must have been good children, for it was seldom that any sound of crying issued from their home. They always seemed to be in a high state of enjoyment when they came out to view.

But the eldest was growing tall and *sad*. Reflection had begun its work in her mind. She saw that her mother was a far different being from the mothers that she beheld when she entered other homes. She became restless and unhappy, and was always longing for, she could not tell what. One day, she said to her father, when he had found her weeping in the porch at evening—

"Father, I don't like to stay here. I wish you would have me dressed up, and send me away to school. Won't you, father? I am almost twelve years old, and don't know anything yet."

Owen thought on his child's request, and finally acceded to it. He did more—he sent two of the other children—one eleven and one ten years of age—away with his eldest girl. They were gone for years, and all the time of their absence things were growing worse and worse at home.

Suddenly one spring, there were men seen at work upon Owen's house. There were women at work within. There was cleansing and painting and refitting going on. New clothes were prepared for all the children, and in a short time the home of Owen presented a really elegant appearance. Firelight and lamplight now shone from the front windows at evening; and when the doors opened, it was no longer to emit nude children, but happy, well-clad boys and girls came bounding down the repaired steps, or handsome young ladies walked out, attended by their proud and grateful father, or some more youthful gentlemen. The skeleton of *that* family, so long visible to the sight of the whole town, had altogether disappeared. The mansion was now open to society, and an agreeable company was gathered almost nightly in its parlors, for the young ladies liked to see their friends as often as they chose to come. Owen was an altered man. He was rejuvenated through the agency of his charming daughters. Sarah, in particular, the eldest child, was the star of his heart. He yielded entirely to her gentle influence, and hers was the will that wisely ruled the restored house. All was done as she wished. And now Owen was happier than he had been for many, many years. What had become of the wife and mother none knew—none dared to ask. She was never more seen, and never did one member of the family mention her.

A few more years, and Sarah was married. She did not, however, forsake the home that she had purified and made the abode of peace and happiness. Her father could not think, for a moment, of allowing that, and, as he said, the house was large enough for ten more. A suite of rooms was fitted up for the bride, and the river of joy flowed on with unobstructed but higher waters than before, through the white mansion. After a year or two more had gone, the whole family appeared one Sabbath clad in black. They said that Alice was dead, and none asked for further information. Owen's face was for some weeks downcast, and tears ever and anon were seen dropping from his eyes; but in time his sadness vanished, and now there are merry bells pealing joy for the widower. He has pleased his children, and himself still more, by taking to his home a new bride, who is worthy to reign over "the transformed house," and under whose firm yet mild dominion, all the virtues and tastes which secure happiness will be cherished within its walls.

BEAUTY.

The philosophers will never agree in the definition of beauty, though every one knows what it is. Burke was beautifully sublime on the "sublime and beautiful," but the world is little the wiser for his speculations. Whether beauty really exists in the object which is called beautiful, or whether the beauty is "all in your eye," as the phrase is,—that is to say, exists only in the mind of the observer,—has never been definitely settled, and perhaps never will be. It is not impossible that the whole truth in the matter is comprehended in both theories—that beauty is partly in the object and partly in the mind that gives it recognition. This much is true, at least, that while two persons shall both agree that a particular thing has beauty, one of them shall see much more than the other, accordingly as his taste or imagination shall be better. Of beauty in person, some writer has said "there is none to be found after a fortnight's intimate acquaintance, except beauty of expression merely, and even that depends on association." The dogma is sometimes too strong to be wholly true, and yet the truth doubtless lies within it. Fortunate is he who has a ready discernment of beauty in nature and art—in the world of external objects and the world of internal reflections.

Though laughter is looked upon by the philosophers as the property of reason, the excess of it has been always considered as the mark of folly.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, JULY 10, 1858.

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MR. COBB'S NEW SEA STORY.

Next week we shall begin Mr. Cobb's new sea story, which we have no hesitation in saying is the very best thing which that universally popular writer has ever written. It is a masterly *Romance of the Ocean*, abounding in new scenes and new characters, and filled with the wildest adventure and the most heart-stirring interest, yet true to nature and to life, and characterized, as all of Mr. Cobb's stories are, by a high moral tone. The title of the new tale is, "GLENDOWER; or, *The North Sea Rover*—a Story of the Coast and Waters of Old England."

GOD OVER ALL.

Eccentric, perverse, and contradictory as the human element in creation may be; diversely as *times, seasons, and circumstances may seem to the* individual man, and, above all, indifferent as His providence may appear to the prayer of our petty selfishness and the schemes of our narrow purposes, surely an almighty and beneficent God is over all. Aggregate the creation, and His order is perfect—His goodness adorably divine. Of all things so jarring to our distempered short-sight, not one but is best adapted, as related to the whole, and the whole is sympathetic and participant with every minutest part; or, in the language of a philosophic poet:

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole."

Stupendous in scope and proportion, magnificent in usefulness and beauty, and a thousand-fold more harmonious, and musical in His praise, than the rarest instrument of mortal make. God over all!—how eloquently the universe proclaims it—day unto day uttereth speech thereof, and night unto night addeth knowledge. It gleams through the gates of morning, and flashes backward on the latest sunbeam; the earth breathes of it, and it is the mighty voice of many waters. Out in the fields, and over the wooded hill-tops, it comes in tides of incense and music; not a bird but repeats it, from the robin at the cabin door, to the lark "soaring and singing in the heavens;" not a blossom but exhales it, from the blue-eyed violet lost in "the folds of the dewy grass," to

"The milk-white thorn that scents the evening gale."

God over all!—His love, beaming from every star and from every flower; His bounty, pouring from unnumbered sources, more than hand of man can compass, or heart of man desire; His justice, scorning castes and creeds, rebuking the pretensions of the proud and the fears of the humble, and measuring to each the same measure of blessing—who, against all this, will stand forth and say God is not over all? The human wrong may seem to succeed, the human oppression may seem to flourish, the human caprice may momently rule and triumph, but all these, so great in our eyes and so momentous on our records, are only here and there, fleeting and perishable—things born of to-day and forgotten to-morrow—while the power, the love, the bounty, and the justice of God remain immutable, forever.

God over all!—princes may fancy they rule, and nations may upbuild themselves and dream of permanence of place and power, man may put on his haughtiest look and inscribe his vain pomp on pyramid and pillar, and say, what much of his trophy has vauntingly said—"I am," but "He that sitteth in the heavens shall hold him in derision"—in a little time the sceptres of kings are broken, the nations are dead, the pyramids and the pomps written thereon are perished, and man—the universal race of man—has "gone to his long home," leaving, as in the beginning and forever, God over all. Let us think of this, as a curb to our vanity and pride—as a spur to our reverence, our gratitude, and our faith—as an extinguisher of the wretched skepticisms, or more miserable egotisms, which lead man to invest the divine order of things, to deify himself, and to fancy himself indifferent to, or independent of, God! Every day, hour, and moment of our lives ought to be illumined by a devouter sense of that grandest of all truths, that God is over all—and that He has marked out the way of life, and declared that He will "judge every man according to his works."

A CHILD'S SYMPATHY.—A child's eyes—those clear wells of undefiled thought—what on earth can be more beautiful? Full of hope, love and curiosity, they meet your own. In prayer, how earnest! in joy, how sparkling! in sympathy, how tender! The man who has never tried the companionship of a little child, has carelessly passed by one of the greatest pleasures of life, as one passes a rare flower without plucking it, or knowing its value.

VIGILANCE COMMITTEES.

Order is not more heaven's first law, than law is the only firm basis of order. In the tribe, the family, the community and the State, there can be no surety of harmony, no permanence of order without law—law, established, respected and obeyed. Even isolate man finds the courses of his being vague, wandering and futile, without a chart of order bounded by the compass of law. There must be fixed rule or certain disorder, and it matters little whether the code be written or unwritten, so long as it is understood. Man, and the community or State, may outgrow any given rule, however wise for its time, but mischief and woe to that society, be it small or great, where customary law is set aside violently; not by calm deliberation but by frenzied passion.

It is far better to suffer great evils under the law than to override law by disorderly revolution. All history, all experience has shown this. Hence we have ever looked with suspicion and fear upon Vigilance Committees, or whatever other method of rule and reform, set up in defiance of customary authority. All such rule is revolutionary and uncertain. It may prove a blessing, it may turn out a curse. The seizure or sudden possession of unaccustomed authority and power has, oftener than otherwise, intoxicated and maddened its possessors, and rendered them scourges rather than benefactors. Peoples have been glad to go back from the wilder new despotism, to the milder old. Communities and nations have experienced this.

The purpose of revolutionists may be noble at the start, yet foul and destructive long before the end. As the current of the violent revolution swells with success, mercenary motives and selfish ambitions usurp the first feeling of enthusiasm and patriotism, and what began with a promise of order and liberty, closes in confusion, terror and destruction. The league started by the cry of reform, has too often become a mob, more baneful than any sober tyranny. The California Vigilance Committee was a tolerable instance, since all other means of redress than violent revolution seemed exhausted—besides, the movement was as universal as spontaneous. But the more recent example in New Orleans has not impressed us as tolerable. Admitting the grievance of great and growing disorder under the law, what new thing was this in the history of New Orleans? It is not shown on close questioning that the Crescent city has been criminal out of ratio for the past two or three years. The fact that the city election was carried in the face of the Vigilance Committee, shows that the attempted revolution was not endorsed by the people—as it surely would have been had all the charges of the Vigilants been felt to be true. We are apprehensive that party politics and personal schemes were the spring of the movement, and hence we believe that its defeat was desirable.

We are for revolution when it is the only means left to accomplish reform. Our Revolution was of that sort, and ours might have failed of its great and blessed results, had God given us champions less pure, wise and patriotic. It was a Revolution deliberate and on principle. The instinct to it was universal, because it was felt to be equally necessary and just. All revolution, whether by peoples or city Vigilance Committees, inspired by lower motives and to lesser ends, is disorderly and de-[illegible]. It may triumph for a time, but it will perish finally. It must be so, for God has decreed that man in society, as well as the natural world, can exist harmoniously only through obedience to law. If laws are bad or insufficient, let them be amended, but while they exist, there can be no social order or safety except they be respected and obeyed—particularly where they are laws of the people's own making.

INDEPENDENCE DAY.

The eighty-third year of our independence finds the Federal cluster of glorious States increased from thirteen to thirty-three, and our population grown from three millions to thirty millions. It also finds the sails of our ships whitening every sea, and our name a power on the earth. In the world's history, as a nation, we are scarcely a day old, and what a prodigious baby! It laves its feet in the Atlantic, and cools its brow in the Pacific; its right hand rippling Lake Superior, and its left the Gulf of Mexico. All nations seek our friendship and our alliance. The name of American citizen is a protection in every land where civilization reigns, and our flag is respected wherever it floats. And not only in material greatness have we grown, but in art and in science, in morals and in philosophy, in refinement and in benevolence; as witness our churches, our missionary enterprises, our schools and colleges, our asylums and hospitals for every form of affliction, and the bright names we have added to the world's catalogue of the beloved and the honored. It is well to meditate on these things, and to remember, while we exult in our country's prosperity and renown, that the interests and honor, the growth and the glory of this remarkable land, are now in *our* keeping, and that for the manner in which we discharge the sacred trust, posterity will hold us to a strict account.

THE MILK QUESTION.

It strikes us that our city authorities have the power, without being partial or arbitrary, to settle the vexing milk question. Since among the witnesses before the milk investigating committee there were some who averred their preference for "Swill Milk," while others were for the milk of grass-fed cows, just let both articles be peddled as heretofore, each pedlar being required, under stringent penalties, to inscribe his *kind of milk* conspicuously on his wagon and cans. This will give every person a chance to select the milk they prefer. Milk is a great institution, and the character of it is well worthy of public consideration. If the old cow could be divorced from the pump, we doubt not that both "swill" and grass-fed milk would be considerably improved—as the "stuff" is now diluted, it is about as difficult to distinguish milk from the green pool water in some of the up-town sunken lots, as to tell how the milk got into the cocoanut. Stump-tailed or long-tailed, the beverage drawn from "Cherry," "Betty," and "Brindle," is no more like the creamy article we used to imbibe out in the country, than a beanpole is like the tower of Babel.

THE CENTRAL PARK.

We hope the men who have the laying out of this public pleasure ground in charge, will remember that the great majority of those who will resort to it for relaxation will be persons of too little means to command recreation beyond the city—artizans, mechanics, needle-women, clerks, etc. For pedestrians the most ample accommodations should be furnished. For them let there be imposing avenues, shady walks, labyrinthian paths, flower-decked vales, and cooling rivulets. The carriage and horse-back folk are generally of the class who can best afford to stand back in a city's public places. They can ride and drive for recreation beyond the city's limits; but poor people can not, and should therefore have the luxury of a great park laid out mainly for their accommodation.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

A LAW MORE NICE THAN JUST.

Here I have been sitting twiddling the morning paper between my fingers this half hour, reflecting upon the following paragraph in it: "Emma Wilson was arrested yesterday for wearing man's apparel." Now, why this should be an actionable offense is past my finding out, or where's the harm in it, I am as much at a loss to see. Think of the old maids (and weep) who have to stay at home evening after evening, when, if they provided themselves with a coat, pants and hat, they might go abroad, instead of sitting there with their noses flattened against the window-pane, looking vainly for "the Coming Man." Think of the married women who stay at home after their day's toil is done, waiting wearily for their thoughtless, truant husbands, when they might be taking the much needed independent walk in trowsers, which custom forbids to petticoats. And this, I fancy, may be the secret of this famous law—who knows? It *wouldn't* be pleasant for some of them to be surprised by a touch on the shoulder from some dapper young fellow, whose familiar treble voice belied his corduroys. That's it, now. What a fool I was not to think of it—not to remember that men who make the laws, make them to meet all these little emergencies.

Everybody knows what an everlasting drizzle of rain we have had lately, but nobody but a woman, and a woman who lives on fresh air and out-door exercise, knows the thraldom of taking her daily walk through a three weeks' rain, with skirts to hold up, and umbrella to hold down, and puddles to skip over, and gutters to walk round, and all the time in a fright lest, in an unguarded moment, her calves should become visible to some one of those rainy-day philanthropists who are interested in the public study of female anatomy.

One evening, after a long rainy day of scribbling, when my nerves were in double-twisted knots, and I felt as if myriads of little ants were leisurely traveling over me, and all for want of the walk which is my daily salvation, I stood at the window, looking at the slanting, persistent rain, and took my resolve. "*I'll do it*," said I, audibly, planting my slipper upon the carpet. "Do what?" asked Mr. Fern, looking up from a big book. "Put on a suit of your clothes and take a tramp with you," was the answer. "You dare not," was the rejoinder; "you are a little coward, only saucy on paper." It was the work of a moment, with such a challenge, to fly up stairs and overhaul my philosopher's wardrobe. Of course we had fun. Tailors must be a stingy set, I remarked, to be so sparing of their cloth, as I struggled into a pair of their handiwork, undeterred by the vociferous laughter of the wretch who had solemnly vowed to "cherish me" through all my tribulations. "Upon my word, everything seems to be narrow where it ought to be broad, and the waist of this coat might be made for a hogshead; and, ugh! this shirt collar is cutting my ears off, and you have not a decent cravat in the whole lot, and your vests are frights, and what am I to do with my hair?" Still no reply from Mr. Fern, who lay on the floor, [illegible] lating, between his fits of laughter, "Oh, my! by Jove!—oh! by Jupiter!"

Was that to hinder me? Of course not. Strings and pins, woman's never-failing resort, soon brought broadcloth and kerseymere to terms. I parted my hair on one side, rolled it under, and then secured it with hair-pins; chose the best fitting coat, and capping the climax with one of those soft, cosy hats, looked in the glass, where I beheld the very fac-simile of a certain musical gentleman, whose photograph hangs this minute in Brady's entry.

Well, Mr. Fern seized his hat, and out we went together. "Fanny," said he, "you must not take my arm; you are a fellow." "True," said I, "I forgot; "and you must not help me over the puddles, as you did just now, and do, for mercy's sake, stop laughing. There, there goes your hat—I mean *my* hat; confound the wind! and down comes my hair; lucky 'tis dark, isn't it?" But oh, the delicious freedom of that walk, after we were well started! No skirts to hold up, or to draggle their wet folds against my ankles; no stifling vail flapping in my face, and blinding my eyes; no umbrella to turn inside out, but instead, the cool rain driving slap into my face, and the resurrectionized blood coursing through my veins, and tingling in my cheeks. To be sure, Mr. Fern occasionally loitered behind, and leaned up against the side of a house to enjoy a little private "guffaw," and I could now and then hear a gasping "Oh, Fanny!" "oh, my!" but none of these things moved me, and if I don't have a nicely-fitting suit of my own to wear rainy evenings, it is because—well, there *are* difficulties in the way. Who's the best tailor?

Now, if any male or female Miss Nancy who reads this feels shocked, let 'em! Any woman who likes, may stay at home during a three weeks' rain, till her skin looks like parchment, and her eyes like those of a dead fish, or she may go out and get a consumption dragging round wet petticoats; I won't—I positively declare I won't. I shall begin *evenings* when *that* suit is made, and take private walking lessons with Mr. Fern, and they who choose may crook their backs at home for fashion, and then send for the doctor to straighten them; I prefer to patronize my shoe-maker and tailor. I've as good a right to preserve the healthy body God gave me, as if I were not a woman.

FANNY FERN.

OUR STREETS.

The condition of the streets of the city and of the roads leading to the upper end of the island is indescribably outrageous. Hundreds of thousands of dollars are annually paid to keep our thoroughfares in repair, and what is the result of all this vast expenditure? Simply, the worst streets and roads in Christendom. From Union Square to Manhattanville the thoroughfares are but a succession of holes, gullies, jumbles of loose stones, and quagmires, with the exception of one or two hundred yards in front of ex-Mayor Wood's residence on Bloomingdale Road. It is impossible to take any pleasure in riding over such highways, and a drive over them to an invalid ordered out for exercise and fresh air would be anything but comfortable. None but the strongest and healthiest constitutions can stand such joltings, and rollings, and pitchings. It is, we suppose, not to be expected that our authorities will amend the public ways any more than their own; yet we think we might reasonably ask that for every dollar stolen from the city treasury at least one good paving-stone should be firmly put down somewhere, or one "rut" filled up. At that rate we should soon have our streets and roads in decent order.

THE mind may be overburthened; like the body, it is strengthened more by the warmth of exercise than of clothes.

THE BORROWER.

BY A PATRON OF "MY UNCLE."

The Borrower, with admirable consistency of character, borrows his motto from Shakspeare—"Base is the slave who pays!" He understands the meaning of the verb "to give," as in the case of a political subscription or a charitable donation, of which lists are published in the papers. Generous people give—poor-spirited people pay. He looks upon himself as a professor of the most ancient and noble art extant—the art of borrowing.

By the art of borrowing, he of course means borrowing money. All other loans he despises except in cases of extremity—as misapplications of great powers, and as tending to bring a great principle into a familiarity which breeds contempt. To be sure, the man who borrows ready-made articles is no fool, but he is a small dealer, and generally disgraces the art. What can he promise himself? What does he attain to? He can seldom get beyond a set of books, an umbrella, or a great coat: this is poor work, and renders borrowing a bore to both parties. Money alone, the sure means of purchasing pleasures of any pattern—the medium for the exercise of our free will—the power of defying the world—

"The glorious privilege
Of being independent—"

this alone is worthy the great soul, the proud purpose, the noble ambition of the enlightened Borrower; he should, as Cobbett used to say, "get gold and keep it." He will take good care, at all events, if he have the least pretensions to honor—never to pay it back.

We have already intimated that to pay back money is inconsistent with the principle of borrowing; but a different doctrine, we are aware, has been craftily broached in some quarters, and a different practice in some cases prevails. Borrowers of some credit and character are now and then known to create much disappointment by actually returning the money—by observing their "promise to pay" to the letter, and thereby violating the spirit of it. This occurs in cases where, a small sum having been lent, there is thought to be no chance of extorting the loan of a large one but by the repayment of the trifle. Convenient as the plan may be, and at first sight it seems defensible enough, it is in point of fact tampering with an essential principle. It is a descent from the high to the middle ground—it countenances the fatal doctrine of expediency, and compromises an intrinsic right.

The high-minded Borrower is proof against the plausibility of this practice. He is not of opinion that the end justifies the means. He never can be persuaded, under any circumstances whatever, to violate the first rule of his art. All that he ever hazards doing in this way, is to write to you to advance him a good round sum, requesting that *you will deduct what he owes you from the amount*. No sophistry, no tenet of expediency, no suggestion of convenience ever succeeds in inducing him to pay back the money he has borrowed: he would as soon think of turning lender. He gets his gold by fair play, and he keeps it upon a defined principle. He acts upon an upright and very simple [illegible] of never taking a denial; he asks, and asks for ever—but is always accommodating; he wants fifty dollars, but he will put up with fifteen, and take your note for the rest; or he will call to-morrow, or on Friday, for the balance. If you regret that you cannot accommodate him on the instant, he merely inquires when you can; next week will do for him. If you cannot possibly name a time and see no likelihood, then he can drop in and take his chance; and, in the meantime, you will just be so good as to give him a note of introduction to Mr. Loosecash, your agent in Lothlane.

Such is his urbanity that you cannot offend him; you are "not at home" three times a day for a whole week, but on the eighth morning he meets you coming out, and presses your hand with as much fervor as if it had just written him a check. His disinterestedness is equally conspicuous; give him your acceptance for a hundred, and you may have his for a thousand at what date you will. He is the first to rejoice at the repeal of the usury-laws, because *he can now offer you your own terms;* one rate of per centage is the same to him as another.

The Borrower is a vehement advocate for the strict administration of all laws conservative of property. He is a deadly enemy to the swindler. His soul sickens at the sight of a pickpocket. Even forgery, though more genteel, he denounces as infamously unfair. All these pursuits, he contends, militate against the successful practice of borrowing, and all might be more profitably and peaceably carried on upon the principles of that art. He insists that in a free country no man should be plundered without his consent—but that at the same time every man has a right to be robbed if he likes. He is arbitrary in his judgments upon vagrants and other riff-raff—he has no pity for the poor—fellows who pay their way while they can, and when they can't, take to stealing; who know nothing of the golden mean; who have probably "frittered their money away in paying their debts," when, by spending it rationally, they might always have borrowed in an honorable independence. Yet it is curious that these two negatives, the beggar and the thief, make up that grand affirmative, the Borrower. It is simply so. How weak the elements that compose this strong and subtle spirit! Anybody can beg, anybody can steal; but to unite the two—to BORROW—requires profound genius. But the world, as we daily see, is full of profound genius.

THE WAR FLURRY.

The war flurry is about blown over. As we expected would be the case, the commander of the British squadron in the Gulf disavows the acts of the cruisers who have offended our commerce, and not only disavows, but has sent a vessel to overhaul them, and promises to hold their officers to a strict account. So, too, has the British Government disavowed the lawless acts of its cruisers. It is shewn that they were not acting under recent instructions from any source, but "bluffing" on their own hook under some ten years old Admiralty orders. We are glad to see the horizon clear up so quickly, and now we suggest, as a preventive of further loose aggressions, that the British Government revoke and blot out all its old orders and instructions that even squint toward a "right of search" in time of peace. Let us start fair and square, with the mutual understanding that John Bull is to stick to his own colors, and mind his own business, while Brother Jonathan does the same. The war party may as well hang up their fiddles, for they have not the ghost of a chance, unless by some squandering war-sloop and gun-boat display they can provoke a quarrel. They are evidently willing and anxious to "kick up a row." The Mormon war, also, may be set down as ended—before it begun. Our troops will soon be in the condition of the famous legionaries, who

"Marched up the hill, and then marched down again."

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

DRESS is external gentility, frequently used to disguise internal vulgarity. Wise men will neither be the first to adopt a new fashion, nor the last to abandon an old one, for an affectation of singularity is only the desire to set the mode, instead of following it. Eccentricity of appearance is the contemptible ambition of being personally known to those who do not know you by name.

ONE of the few consolations at present left for those to whom the favor of Heaven and the care of their parents have vouchsafed morals and sense, is that the race of rascals and the breed of fools are not running out, and that the competition among them is growing so multitudinous and so hot, that it must shortly spoil their business.

To eat and drink is to supply the lamp of life with cotton and oil. If, however, we make the stomach a regular cemetery of food, the body will soon become the sepulchre of the soul. To make a god of your belly is to sell yourself to the devil. The poor are much less injured by occasional fasts than the luxurious by constant feasts.

IT is the proud prerogative of noble natures that they retain their influence after death. The lamps which guided us on earth, become stars to light us from above, and the beneficent may still claim our aspirations as the blessed—a species of apotheosis equally honorable to the living and the dead.

IN some parts of the country, editors are always supporting other men for office, and asserting no rights to office themselves. They remind us of the walking horse-blocks described by Plutarch—fellows crouching upon all-fours and offering their backs to every horseman willing to accept the accommodation.

SOME read to think, these are rare; some to write, these are common; and some to talk, and these form the great majority. It has been said of the latter class that they treat books as some do lords—inform themselves of their titles, and then boast of an intimate acquaintance.

"WHAT do you mean, you little rascal?" exclaimed an individual to an impudent youth that had seized him by the nose upon the street. "Oh, nothing, only I am going out to seek my fortune, and father told me to be sure to seize hold of the first thing that *turned up*."

A TEXAS editor, in a dispute with his neighbor about a political election, offers to bet a sea-serpent upon the result. The neighbor declines this, but says he is quite willing to go twenty large alligators. They seem to have rather curious kinds of a circulating medium in those parts.

"THE wicked don't live out half their days," said a good man to his negro servant. "Dat is queer," said Cuffy. "Him no live out half his day? Den I s'pose he die 'bout 'leben o'clock in de forenoon."

"YOU always lose your temper in my company," said an individual of doubtful reputation to a gentleman. "True, sir, and I shouldn't wonder if I lost everything I have about me."

THERE are many things that are thorns to our hopes until we have attained them, and envenomed arrows to our heart when we have.

A HATTER in our town advertises that his hats sit so easily upon the head that the wearers scarcely feel them. Unquestionably the best hats are not *felt*.

"PRAY, sir, what makes you walk so crookedly?" "Oh, my nose, you see, is crooked, and I have to follow it."

A GREAT many persons undertake to build fortunes as Pat tried to build his chimney. They begin at the top and *build down*.

IT is a pretty saying of an old writer, that men, like books, begin and end with blank leaves—infancy and senility.

"MR., I want to buy a shilling's worth of hay." "Is it for your father?" "Oh, no, it's for the horse—dad doesn't eat hay."

"HUSBAND, I have the asthma so bad that I can't breathe." "Well, my dear, I wouldn't try; nobody wants you to."

IT is said that good actions are never thrown away. As a necessary consequence, we find very few of them.

IF a person complains of the town in which he lives, the presumption is that he is despised in it.

IT is better to be the sheep of a poor and honest shepherd than a mutton-pie at the feast of a king.

PEACE is the evening star of the soul, and virtue its sun; the two are never far apart.

LOQUACIOUS mouths are like badly-managed banks. They make large issues on no solid capital.

WE often pretend to fear what we really despise, and more often to despise what we really fear.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A MAN named Wilson, a short time since, broke into the dwelling of a Mr. Branham, in Platte, Wis., and dragging Mr. B. (who had been ill for a week) from the bed, forced him out of doors, and after beating him dreadfully began trying to wring off his head. It was about midnight, and very dark. Mrs. Branham, alarmed at her husband's cries and calls for aid, seized a large stick, and hastening to his assistance, beat Wilson over the head until he released her husband. The noise aroused the neighbors, and on a light being brought, Wilson was found dead, his brains being beaten out. Mrs. Branham was examined by a justice of the peace and acquitted, the homicide being considered justifiable.

A CHIEF of the Snake Indians, residing near Utah, died lately, and his relatives, in addition to the killing of his favorite horses over his grave, buried with him, alive, a little boy of whom he was very fond, in order that the lad might accompany him to the spirit land. They wrapped the boy up alive in a blanket, and placing him in the grave with the corpse, buried them together.

A NAPLES (Italy) newspaper states that there are now living in Sanarica a brother and sister, the former of whom was born in November, 1738, and the latter in November, 1741, thus counting between them 237 years; and yet they are both active and hearty, and earn their own living.

A MAN living in Washington, Pa., recently lost his wife in the morning, was arrested for a criminal offence before 11 o'clock, A. M., got bail and married a second wife in the evening, and the next morning followed the remains of his first wife, accompanied by his second, to the grave.

A MACHINE for manufacturing ice by steam has been made by a London firm. It is said that it will turn out ice with great rapidity during the hottest weather. The secret is some peculiar combination of the principles of condensation and evaporation. Such an invention would be priceless in tropical countries.

A MAN named William Evans recently made a donation of $10,000 to the town of Smithfield, Mass., as a grateful recognition of the support of himself and parents by said town during his infancy, at which time his parents were paupers.

A LARGE shark was recently caught by the crew of the American brig "Minisink," off the island of St. Thomas, and on hauling him on deck and cutting him open, the legs and lower part of the body of a man were found in his stomach in a state of partial decomposition.

THERE is a rumor going the rounds of the press to the effect that Charles Dickens and his wife are about to separate. We don't believe a word of it; but we do believe that any one base enough to fabricate such slanders would pick a pocket or rob a hen-roost.

EXPERIMENTS on a large scale, for paying out the Atlantic Telegraph cable, have been tried recently, with the very best success, and it is confidently believed that during the summer the cable will be securely laid across the Atlantic.

AS we predicted some time ago, the Mormons have not dared to await the advent of the United States troops among their wives, but, catching up their ready cash and their "sealed spirituals," they have departed to parts unknown.

A YOUNG lady named Maria Cummings, of Louisville, Ky., recently sued a Mr. Allen Sutton for courting her three years and then marrying another sweetheart. The jury gave her $2,000 damages.

THE London Times, in a late article, said that the time had come for the British government to say to the United States that they can hereafter do as they please on the western side of the Atlantic.

A PORTION of a religious society in Indiana have set the community at variance by attempting to introduce the washing of feet as an ordinance in the church. If their feet need washing, why not wash them?

MRS. KELLER, residing two miles south of Middletown, Md., a short time since died suddenly, in convulsions, caused by her terror at a violent thunder storm.

"IT IS I,—BE NOT AFRAID."

BY MRS. L H. SIGOURNEY.

Friend, in every woe and care,
Hearer of our inmost prayer,
Which at dawn of morning gray
Ere the shadows fleet away,
All unclothed by language steals,
And before Thy footstool kneels,
Friend Eternal, Friend Divine,
Be our warmest praises Thine.

O'er this world's tempestuous tide,
Be our pole-star and our guide;
Though the surges wild and dark
Thundering threat the lonely bark,
Tho' the tempest wake in dread,
Tho' the wrecks are round us spread,
Let Thy promise be our aid,
"It is I,—be not afraid."

When this clay with shuddering start
From the soul is call'd to part,
Yield the quickening breath of God,
And become a lifeless clod,
Let Thy arm of strength be near,
Let Thy voice the conflict cheer,
Thro' the darkened valley's shade,
"It is I,—be not afraid."

Baltimore, June 12th, 1858.

RICHARD HOFFMAN;

OR,

THE PEASANT AND THE NOBLEMAN.

A TALE OF LOVE AND RETRIBUTION.

CHAPTER LVIII.

LADY BOOTHROYD PLAYS ANOTHER TRUMP.

It is now time that we return to two characters in our tale who, although they have not occupied a very prominent position, have, we doubt not, seemed as such in the recollection of our readers. We allude to William Thornton and Alice Boothroyd, who had not met since the day of the boat-race at Eton, doubtless to the great satisfaction of the managing mother, who had other and far more ambitious views for her daughter, views in which her husband, Sir Norman, fully shared.

William's career at the university had been a most honorable one, to the intense disgust of his old schoolfellow, Viscount Illston, who, as a matter of course, cut his former protector at Cambridge. The *parvenu* had carried off the honors of his year, stood for a fellowship, and, what was more to the purpose, had the good fortune to obtain it.

When we say the good fortune, we allude, of course, to the distinction. The wealth of his father rendered the income attached to it a matter of very secondary importance to William.

The gratification which his success gave amply repaid the young man for the year's really hard labor—for reading is labor—which he had devoted to the achievement of his success. But still, something was wanting to crown his triumph, and to make him feel that it really was a success. We scarce need to say it was the smile of Alice.

Frequently, when seated in his room at college, poring over his mathematics by the midnight lamp, the figures would disappear, or become so confused that it was impossible longer to recognize them, or, in other words, the problem would change to a still more difficult one—the features of a fair young girl, which imagination had substituted in their place.

And now that the victory was won, his toil rewarded, it did seem rather hard that the smile, whose light would have been his sweetest recompense, should be wanting; but nothing is perfect in this world, not even a senior wrangler's triumph.

Lord Illston had taken his degree as a matter of *right;* being the son of a peer, he was entitled to it—an *honorary one.*

Alice was no longer a child. In thought and feeling, even more than in years, she was now a woman. Nature had been liberal, not only in the endowments of person, but in those mental gifts which add a charm to beauty, and lend a lasting grace when mere personal ones have vanished. Lady Boothroyd—who, since the establishment of the family in London, had completely established her sway over the weak, vacillating mind of her husband—did not know what to make of her. She appeared to be without ambition—a peculiarity her mother could by no means comprehend. In her disappointment she pronounced her an exceeding odd girl.

Those who knew her best considered her a right-thinking one.

To her father, whose weakness she saw and pitied, the fair girl was affectionate and submissive as a child should be; to her mother, respectful; but it was evident that the mercenary woman was far from possessing that hold upon her affections which the tie of nature would seem to warrant.

One morning, when chatting with her ladyship upon the future prospects of their heiress, the butler entered the room with a card.

"For me?" inquired his mistress.

"For Sir Norman, my lady."

The man presented it to the baronet, who took it listlessly, and read the name, "Major Hawley, Punjaub Horse."

"Do you know him?" asked the gentleman, handing it to his wife. "I have not the slightest recollection of such a person."

"Nor I," was the reply.

"Not at home," said the master of the house.

An idea suddenly struck Lady Boothroyd, that it was the name of the regiment in which her brother-in-law, the unfortunate Allan, had served, and with that restlessness which invariably accompanies the consciousness of guilty actions, she decided on seeing him.

"You had better receive him," she said; "I believe he is from India."

Her husband colored at the word.

"At home," she added.

The butler quitted the room.

"What is it you suspect?" faltered the baronet.

"That it is some friend of your brother Allan's," replied his wife; "and there is much respecting him that I wish to learn. Show no surprise," she added, "at any statement he may make, no matter how strange or improbable it may appear to you."

"I do not comprehend you."

"It is not necessary that you should," was the dry rejoinder; "and I have not time now to explain my motives. You shall know them hereafter. I have spared you no inconsiderable annoyance by keeping from you a secret, which, after the visit of this man, I suspect will be no longer a secret."

"One word," she added, as she heard approaching steps in the antechamber; "not a word of Barny Gee."

The baronet felt uneasy at the name, for it brought painful and unpleasant recollections to his mind.

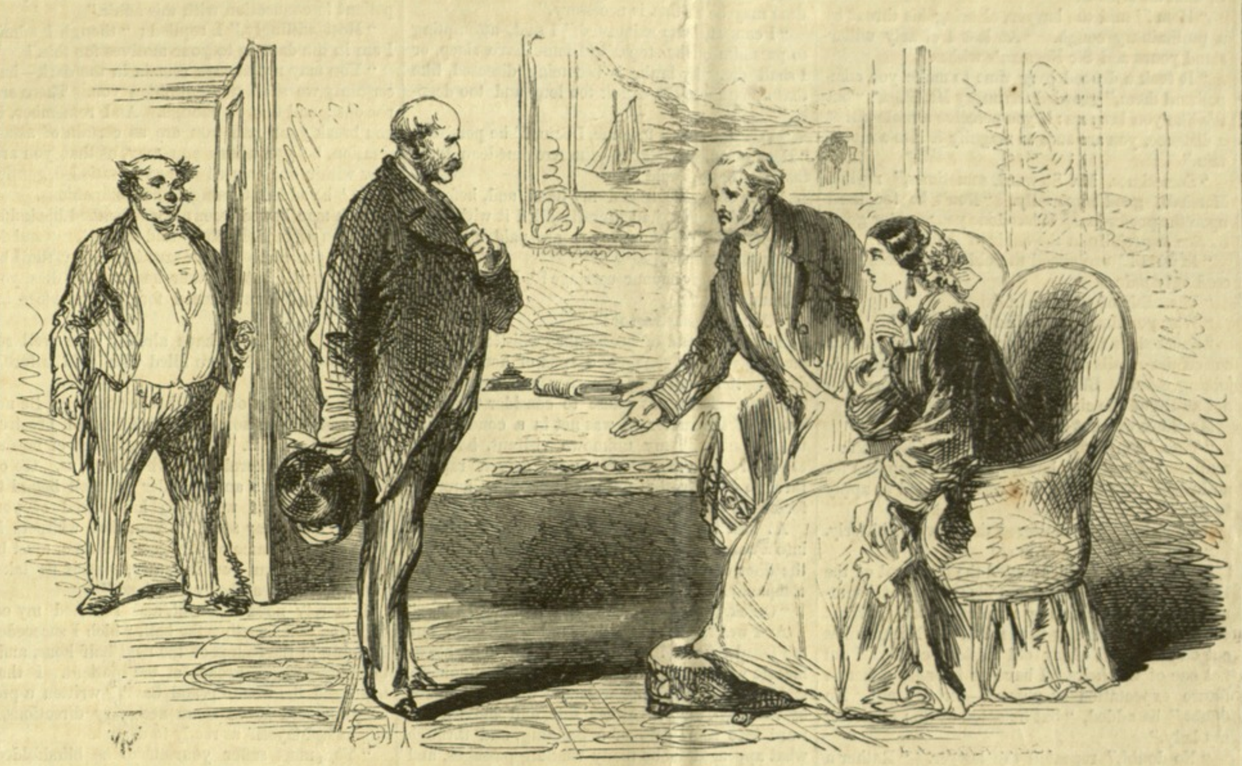
The next instant the visitor was announced.

Major Hawley proved to be a true specimen of the Indian officer, most of whom have to fight their way to rank and distinction. He was rather rough and soldierlike in his appearance, with great shrewdness in his features, mingled with manliness and kindness.

"I have to apologize, Sir Norman," said the gentleman, "for what I fear must appear rather a singular visit; for my name, I doubt not, is that of a stranger to you."

The baronet bowed, and admitted that he certainly never had heard it before, then paused, evidently in expectation that his visitor would proceed.

"You perceive," continued the major, pointing to his card, which was still lying on the salver, "that I served in the Punjaub Horse."



MAJOR HAWLEY, "OF THE PUNJAUB HORSE."

"*He asked for bread, and they gave him a stone,*" mentally ejaculated the officer.

"We, of course, have nothing to reproach ourselves with," continued the artful woman; "neither do we wish to dwell upon the follies, obstinacy, and errors which drove Allan from England; it would be painful."

"For me to hear," interrupted their visitor, who knew how heartlessly the outcast brother had been treated. "I will therefore spare you what I have no doubt would be equally painful—the task of repeating them. I am aware of everything; for as I said before, we were fast friends. I was present at his marriage."

"Marriage!" exclaimed Sir Norman, half starting from his chair, for it was the first time he had heard of such an event.

A look from his wife warned him to be cautious.

"You seem surprised."

"I—really—you——"

"Major Hawley cannot wonder if the subject is *rather* a distasteful one. Amongst military men I am aware a *mesalliance* is looked upon with indulgence; but we cannot forget what Allan owed to his family."

"And to his brother as the head of it," observed Sir Norman, proudly.

"You seem to be laboring under a singular error," said the gentleman, "respecting the wife of my friend. In point of family, the lady was every way unexceptionable—the sister of a distinguished officer, who quitted the service with the respect and regret of all who knew him."

"And may I inquire the name?" asked her ladyship.

"Is it possible you are not acquainted with it?"

"Were I, my question would be unnecessary."

"True, very true," answered the major. "Pardon me the observation. The name of the lady was Lillian Marsh. But I will at once proceed to the purport of my visit."

"If you please."

"My wife accompanied me to England."

Sir Norman mentally wondered how Mrs. Major Hawley's visit to England could possibly interest him.

"She is naturally anxious to see her god-daughter."

"He must be mad," thought the baronet, who began to feel rather alarmed.

Not so her ladyship—she perfectly understood him.

"Perhaps," said the gentleman, "you will permit Miss Boothroyd to visit us."

"Are we playing at a game of cross purposes, major?" demanded the astonished master of the house. "You send up your card, avow yourself a perfect stranger, and cooly ask whether I will permit my daughter to visit you. What am I to understand from this?"

"You are in error, Sir Norman; I spoke of your niece, Lillian Boothroyd, the daughter of my deceased friend, Allan."

The surprise of the uncle was too genuine, and that of her ladyship too well acted, to permit their visitor to doubt for an instant the assurance that it was the first time they had ever heard either of Allan's marriage, or of his having left a daughter.

"What!" exclaimed the major, "did not his old servant, Barny Gee, bring her to England to you?"

"Certainly not," replied both husband and wife.

"Did he not arrive himself?"

This was a delicate question, and a vulgar criminal would have boldly denied it, but Lady Boothroyd, with the tactics of superior iniquity, met the danger boldly.

"He did arrive at St. Faith's, but was shot an hour after his arrival, in a poaching affray, at Meldown Park. It was a shocking affair," she added. "Springthorp, one of Sir Norman's keepers, was murdered that same night."

"Poor fellow!" ejaculated the major. "And did he come alone?"

"I believe he brought a child with him."

"That child, Lady Boothroyd, was your niece."

"Is it possible?"

"My niece?" faltered the baronet.

"Yes. Have you never seen her?"

"Never," replied the affectionate uncle.

"Or heard of her claim upon you?"

"How can you suppose such a dreadful thing?" exclaimed Lady Boothroyd. "Although justly offended with Allan, neither my husband nor myself would have permitted his daughter to remain a dependent on the brother of this Barny Gee you spoke of. I saw the child once, and offered to place her in my school at St. Faith's, little dreaming that it was the child of Allan."

Her visitor regarded her doubtfully.

"But my offer was refused," she added. "A few days afterwards the health of Sir Norman rendered a visit to London necessary; and since then we have let Meldown Park."

"Were no papers found upon the body of Barny?" asked the gentleman, after a pause, during which he had vainly tried to collect his thoughts.

"Never that I heard of."

"And the child?"

"Is still, for anything I can tell to the contrary, at St. Faith's with her supposed or real relatives," replied the artful woman.

"And what do you intend to do?"

"Nothing."

"I thought so," muttered the officer, drily.

"What can we do?" demanded the lady. "Prove that the child is really the daughter of Allan, and you will find my husband and myself not only ready, but anxious to acknowledge her; but you cannot expect that either of us will undertake the responsibility of introducing into society, as our niece, a young person who may ultimately prove to be the daughter of a common soldier."

There was something so exceedingly plausible in all this, that Major Hawley suspended his judgment until he had consulted his wife, whose opinion he had long been accustomed to look up to; for, like most women, she possessed, not only a quick perception of character, but was a keen judge of motives as well as of actions.

"I must cause inquiries to be made," he observed.

"In which we shall be most happy to assist you," replied her ladyship. "Sir Norman will give you a letter to his steward and solicitor—both very excellent persons."

"Why not accompany me?"

The baronet shook his head at the proposal, and looked to his clever wife to make a reply to it.

"My dear major, you forget the peculiar position in which we are placed. It is not the mere acknowledgment of our niece, but the providing for her," said Lady Boothroyd, "that we must undertake; but first her claims must be proved. There ought to be no doubt on that point."

"Certainly not."

"All we demand are the proofs; produce them, and then judge us by our conduct."

"Nothing can be fairer."

With this observation, Major Hawley took his leave, certainly more favorably impressed than he had expected, both with the baronet and his lady.

"So," observed Sir Norman, as soon as they were alone, "Allan married after all, on purpose to disappoint me."

His wife smiled.

"And this girl," added her husband, "who in the event of my death without an heir male comes in for half the estate. Do you imagine I will acknowledge her?"

"When I do."

"Never."

"Norman," said his wife, "it is now time that I explain the steps I have taken. I have long been in possession of this dreadful event."

"And kept it from me?"

"From all the world; but you in particular. I wished to guard your peace of mind."

"You were wrong!" exclaimed the baronet angrily. "I should have taken steps which now I fear it will be too late to take. You have robbed, by your weakness, Alice of half her fortune. Illston will never marry her," he added, "without Meldown for her dowry."

"She will have it."

"What mean you?"

"That if I have been secret, I have not been idle. Let the major produce the girl, if he can, and bring forth his proofs; we may laugh at his malice, for the day before we quitted home the child disappeared."

"Disappeared," repeated Sir Norman, slowly.

"Was stolen."

"And has never since been heard of," added his wife, in a whisper.

"She may be found."

"They must seek her in the grave, then!" exclaimed the woman, in a triumphant tone, "for I possess the certificate of her death. She died beneath the roof of the party in whose hands I placed her."

Her husband breathed again.

"You ran a great risk," he observed.

"The stake was a great one," replied his wife. "Think you I would see the fruit of so many years' toil and manœuvering snatched from me? No; I acted even before I had proofs that Lillian was the daughter of your brother. Silex, who saw her first, suspected it from the extraordinary likeness. He imparted his suspicions to me, and now you know all. We may defy detection."

CHAPTER LIX.

ANDREW SILEX'S FEELINGS ARE HURT.

There are many crimes frequently committed in the world, which justice either cannot or will not reach; but, in neither case, is it to be supposed that the perpetrator escapes [illegible] from it. When human justice fails to strike the blow, the hand of Providence supplies its place; and reaches the criminal through the workings of his conscience, the disappointment of the hopes for which he sinned, or the indifference which follows the realization of them; proving how worthless a thing he has paid the price of self-respect, untroubled sleep, and the world's opinion to attain.

Although Andrew Silex had, as we have seen, succeeded in ridding himself both of his brother and nephew—for no better reason than that the one was troublesome, and the second likely to become so—he was far from feeling happy. Age pressed upon him, he began to count his years, and the probability of living to enjoy the promised recompense, for which he had plunged into crime, and violated the tie of nature. The affair of Jack gave him the deepest concern; the threat of the poor boy frequently rang in his ears—that he should live to return and thank him.

He frequently heard it in the lone hour of the night, when his head pressed an uneasy pillow. In the old oak parlor where he loved to sit and count his hoards, a voice would sometimes echo it.

Decidedly, Andrew Silex was not a happy man: he had so long been prosperous in his career of villainy, that even success began to be indifferent to him.

A few days after the interview described in the preceding chapter, just as he was about to quit the Home Farm on his weekly visit to Tiverton, a chaise and pair drove up to the door, and a gentleman and lady alighted.

The old man felt surprised, for he received few visitors.

"Can we see the steward of Sir Norman Boothroyd?" demanded Major Hawley, for it was no other than the comrade of poor Allan.

"I am Mr. Silex," answered Andrew.

The inquirer placed a letter in his hand.

Whilst he is reading it, we will describe the persons of his visitors.

The major was a tall, military-looking man, of about five and forty years of age. Long years of service under an Indian sun had bronzed his features to a hue which imparted additional sternness to their naturally stern expression. There was great decision both in his eyes and lips; the former were gray and piercing, the latter thin, and closely compressed.

Mrs. Major Hawley was a very little woman, with a wasp-like figure, and a countenance so full of life and animation, that it was only by a great stretch the imagination of those who beheld her could imagine she ever indulged in sleep. Her eyes (a woman's character may generally be read in her eyes) were small, but so black and piercing that at times their glance became positively painful, and would have been embarrassing but for the strong expression of benevolence and good nature which every one might read in them,—that is to say, when the feelings of their owner were not excited by scorn, indignation, or suspicion of unworthiness; then, as we before observed, their glance became really embarrassing and insupportable.

Whilst Andrew Silex was reading the letter of Sir Norman, which, we scarcely need state, her ladyship dictated, the aforesaid eyes were fixed upon him with a very peculiar expression.

The lady was summing him up, and the result did not appear to be very favorable.

Availing ourselves of our privilege as an author, we shall read the letter at the same time as the steward.

It ran thus:—

"Mr. Silex,—The bearer of this, Major Hawley, a friend of my deceased brother, Allan Boothroyd, late of the Punjaub Horse, has very much surprised me by informing me that my poor brother was married in India."

The old man had got thus far when he cast a dissatisfied glance under his spectacles at the bearer of the missive.

"A witness," he mentally ejaculated.

"The gentleman further states that the child which the unfortunate man, Barny Gee, brought to St. Faith's with him, and which my lady informs me his brother, Simon Gee, and Hester, his wife, took charge of, is my niece."

"He must be mad," mentally ejaculated the steward, "to write thus."

"*Unfortunately* he has no proofs of this."

The reader breathed more freely.

"You will assist him by every means in your power to discover whether Barny Gee left any papers in the hands of his family, or any other person. Should legal assistance be necessary, send for my lawyer, Marshall, from Exeter. Although it will prove an expense to provide for, and establish my niece, in the event of her proving to be such—for Allan died, as he lived, exceedingly poor—still, Lady Boothroyd and myself are both anxious and willing to do our duty.

"As themajor appears a very excellent person, although a little brusque in his manner, you will pay him every attention; and, the hall being let, offer him the hospitality of the Home Farm."

"Well," said the gentleman, in a tone of impatience, as the reader, after twice perusing the letter, folded it carefully, and placed it in his huge, black leather pocket-book, "what do you say?"

"That I don't believe a word of it," replied Andrew. "The girl was no more Allan Boothroyd's daughter, than she was mine."

"How do you know?"

"Simon Gee and Hester, his wife, both acknowledged and adopted her as their niece; and they are poor."

"Well."

"Would they have done so without proof?"

"That remains to be seen," observed Mrs. Major Hawley, for the first time breaking silence; "I can set the doubt at rest in a few minutes. Take me to their cottage, show me the girl. I was present at her birth—if she is my Lillian, she has a mark under her right ear—a ruby spot no larger than the blossom of a pepul flower."

"Well, that is singular," said the steward; "and unfortunate at the same time, for that would have decided the question."

"What is unfortunate?" demanded the major.

"That the child should have been stolen from the cottage of Barny and his wife, by gipsies, it is supposed, only a few weeks after her arrival."

"Stolen!" repeated Mrs. Hawley.

"And has never since been heard of."

"Don't believe a word of it!" exclaimed the lady, in a tone of disappointment. "If Lillian has been stolen, *it has not been by gipsies.*"

"By whom, then?" said Mr. Silex, with provoking calmness.

"Those who had an interest in making away with her."

"And who might they be? I know of no such persons. The child of Allan Boothroyd," he added, deliberately, "would have been dependent on the charity of her uncle and aunt; and persons of their rank don't generally involve themselves in crime to get rid of relations who are beggars. They must have some interest."

"Pride," pronounced the lady.

Mr. Silex only smiled.

"Besides," she continued, "I am far from being convinced that the daughter of Allan would have been so poor as you describe. His brother has no male heir."

"But he has a daughter," observed the steward.

"The estates are large."

"They go with the title."

"That would depend upon the will of the late baronet."

At this home-thrust Mr. Silex felt that it would be advisable to change his tactics. Evidently the speaker was not a person to be put off lightly. He did not half like her tone and manner whilst addressing him, and still less the glance of her very peculiar dark eyes.

"All this, madam," he said, "is no concern of mine. I have only to carry out the instructions of Sir Norman, which are to afford you every assistance in your inquiries, and offer you the hospitality of the Home Farm."

"Assistance!" repeated the lady, disdainfully, "after sending us down here upon a fool's errand!"

"That was not my master's fault."

"How do you make that out?"

"He never heard, I dare be bound, that there was such a person as the child of Barny Gee—for so I must still call her—in the place, for he was ill at the time."

"But his wife knew it," replied the major.

"Oh, yes. Her ladyship offered to send her to her own school, but Simon and Hester refused to part with her; which makes me think they had good reasons for knowing the truth of her being their niece or not."

"And you believe Lady Boothroyd never *heard* of Lillian's being stolen?"

"I feel certain that she never did," answered the man. "I never thought it worth while to trouble her about such a trivial circumstance, and she has no correspondents at St. Faith's."

"Trivial circumstance!" repeated his visitors.

"Supposing that the girl is not their niece."

"And supposing that she is?"

"Why, then it would be a widely different affair," answered the steward, "for they would be obliged to take charge of her, educate, and provide for her. They could not, for the sake of the family name, suffer her to live upon the charity of a poor weaver, and what is more, they would not, little love as there was between the two brothers."

"I can believe in your master's pride," observed Mrs. Major Hawley, with a certain amount of bitterness, for she recollected the story poor Allan had frequently related to her of his unnatural treatment of him.

"But not his generosity," observed the steward.

"No."

It was no wonder that, with this opinion, neither husband nor wife condescended to accept the hospitality of the Home Farm, which Mr. Silex was not very anxious to press upon them. He had a natural dislike to visitors, and only offered it in compliance with the express directions of Sir Norman.

So, instead of becoming his guests, the worthy couple directed the postboys to drive to the village, to the "King's Arms," where they ultimately installed themselves for a few days, and almost immediately after their arrival sent for Simon Gee and his wife Hester to vist them.

"I wish Marshall were here," muttered the steward, as he saw them depart. "They are likely to prove troublesome customers, and it will require a lawyer to deal with them. I must send off one of the men with a note to him, and give up my own journey to Tiverton; it won't do for me to be out of the way whilst they remain."

With this intention he returned to the house, and seated himself in his sanctum to write the

note proposed. Just as he was about to seal it, there was a gentle tap at the door of the room.

"Come in," cried the old man, impatiently.

The housekeeper made her appearance.

"Well, what is it?" demanded her master, in no very amiable mood; for when out of temper, even Margaret felt it.

"You are writing to Marshall?" she replied.

"I have written to him."

"Uselessly."

"How do you know?"

"Because he has just alighted at the door."

Andrew Silex started from his chair at the intelligence, and after looking carefully round, to see that no private papers were lying about—for he knew the prying disposition of the lawyer, directed the woman to show him into the oak parlor, saying that he would see him there.

The woman looked surprised; it was the first time, since she had resided at the farm, she had ever known Andrew Silex to receive any one in that particular room.

In a few minutes Mr. Marshall made his appearance. He was a tall, gentlemanly-looking man, about fifty years of age, with an air of well-to-doishness in the world which a mere casual observer might very naturally mistake for great respectability. After the usual compliments had passed between them, the new-comer took a seat, for he felt tired with his ride.

"You were about to send for me," he observed.

"How did you know that?" demanded the master of the Home Farm, eyeing him suspiciously.

"Your housekeeper told me so."

"She had better have minded her own business," was the ungracious rejoinder; "I don't like any one to interfere with mine. But I was about to send for you."

"And may I ask the reason?—to make your will, perhaps. You are right, my dear sir, decidedly right. No one can tell what may happen; not that I wish to alarm you, but you are not looking so well—that is to say, quite so well as your friends—and I include myself in the list of them—could wish."

"My will has been made already," answered the steward, drily, "and I have not the slightest intention of changing the disposition I have made of my property; not that I have much to leave, for I am a poor man, Mr. Marshall, a very poor one, whatever the world may say to the contrary."

The lawyer smiled, and although the possessor of a very excellent practice, mentally wished that he was half as rich.

"I say that I am poor!" added the old man, vehemently. "You ought not to be weak enough to believe the stories which the fools of St. Faith's tell respecting my supposed wealth."

"No doubt it is greatly exaggerated by them," observed his visitor.

"I should think it was."

"But still considerable, my dear sir, very considerable; for you have always been a careful man."

"Well, there is no crime in that."

"Decidedly not," replied the lawyer; "but since I cannot be useful to you in the making of your will, perhaps you will be kind enough to inform me on what point I can offer my services."

"It's on Sir Norman's account."

"Indeed! he generally instructs me himself," observed the lawyer, *not altogether pleased at receiving* the orders of his wealthy client through another channel than the original one.

"And now you must be content to receive them through me," observed the old man, with a broad grin, which displayed his shark-like teeth; "not that the affair is very important."

"You must leave me to judge of that. The law, my dear sir, beautiful and simple as it is in principle, has certain complexities and difficulties in practice which none but an experienced hand can disentangle. I have known many a man's property placed in jeopardy from the neglect of what he considered, and what perhaps at first was a mere trifle."

"But Sir Norman's property," answered Andrew Silex, who loved to play with the impatience of the speaker, "is not in jeopardy."

"Difficult to say, very."

The old man handed him the letter. Mr. Marshall read it carefully over, and then perused it again: but the second time he made only a pretence of reading it, for his keen, ferret-eyes, instead of resting on the page, glanced over his spectacles, and scrutinized the countenance of the steward: not that he could read much there; his features were quite as impassible as his own.

"I wish I could read all that is passing in the brain of that old dissembler," thought the man of law. "It would offer me a clue to a mystery I have long sought; but it's no use trying to pump him: he is as impenetrable as the granite and suspicious as a fox."

The gentleman came to this conclusion after long experience. He had frequently made the attempt to pump the occupant of the Home Farm, and failed.

"What is to be done in this affair?" he asked.

"I thought you were to advise me," replied Andrew.

"Hem! Certainly—yes, but to advise, I must be in possession of all the particulars of the case."

"Haven't you read them?"

"*I have read the letter*," was the reply of the man of law: "but you, no doubt, have private instructions for me?"

"Not one."

"That is singular."

"No, it is not," said the steward, with a broad grin, "and for the simple reason that there is no mystery to conceal, and consequently no instructions to give. If the child in question should prove the daughter of Allan Boothroyd, we are quite ready to recognize her."

"*We*," repeated the lawyer, with a marked accent on the plural pronoun.

"When I say we, I mean Sir Norman and his lady."

"Exactly so!"

Andrew took up the country paper and pretended to read it; he was tired of being cross-examined by his visitor.

"And where is this girl?" inquired Mr Marshall.

"How can I tell?"

"That is singular."

"Not in the least, seeing that the gipsies stole her a few days after her arrival in St. Faith's, from the cottage of Simon Gee, the weaver."

"Gipsies stole her!" repeated Marshall, emphatically.

"I told you so."

"And upon what proof do you assert that they were gipsies?"

"Common report."

"Is seldom correct," observed the lawyer, drily.

"Perhaps not," replied the old man, impatiently. "But I question if it is more liable to err than that restless, meddling suspicion which discovers a mystery in a mouse trap—crime in the simplest actions of life. I begin to tire of this. Why don't you speak out plainly, instead of beating about the bushes, and ask me at once whether *we* (I use the plural advisedly this time) have anything to fear from the inquiries of this Major Hawley and the prying curiosity of his wife, who appears ten times more curious than her husband."

"Because——"

"You think I am not prepared to answer it?"

"Perhaps so."

"Well, then, I am prepared. We have nothing either to conceal or fear; but we have the possibility of an imposition to guard against, and that is why I was about to send for you. If you find the proofs of the girl's identity sufficiently clear, we are prepared at once to acknowledge her, that is, *when she is found*."

"Hem!" said the lawyer, clearing his throat by a preliminary cough. "At last I clearly understand yours and Sir Norman's wishes."

"It took a deuced long time to make you comprehend them," growled the angry Mr. Silex; "but it's like you lawyers: if you perceive a mole-hill at a distance, you are sure to magnify it into a mountain."

"Sometimes, Mr. Steward, sometimes," replied Marshall, good-humoredly. "Don't be too hard upon the profession. It has done your master good service, especially in the affair of the entails."

"In what!" exclaimed the old man, turning exceedingly pale.

"The affair of the entails."

"Why you don't mean that he has——"

"Suffered fine and recovery; and consequently cut off the entails upon Meldown Park and the adjoining estate. Bless me," he added, "were you not aware of the circumstance?"

Mr. Silex was not aware of it.

"True," continued the speaker, "Sir Norman recommended secrecy; but how could I suppose for an instant that the caution was intended to apply to you?"

"How, indeed!" muttered the steward, bitterly.

"You will not betray me?"

"Why should I?" demanded the occupant of the Home Farm, who suppressed his feelings of resentment and mortification by a violent effort. "What can it possibly signify to me that Sir Norman has cut off the entail of my old master's estate. I am not one of the heirs. I have no interest, either in future expectation or present—certainly not. No doubt," he added, "but he acted by the advice of my lady."

"No doubt," repeated the lawyer. "Rather a remarkable person, Lady Boothroyd; in fact, I might say, very remarkable."

"You might."

"Do you not know that I once formed a very different opinion of her—thought her a quiet, soulless creature without an opinion, energy, or will of her own; but I was greatly deceived."

"Greatly," groaned Andrew Silex.

"She is a master spirit."

"She is an ungrateful, manœuvring woman," exclaimed the steward, bitterly; "and has labored to deprive me of the confidence of her husband. But she will fail, as others have failed before. I tell you, Marshall," he added, "that the disentailing process you have described, is worthless, absolutely worthless; and you will have to go through the entire proceedings again."

"Why so, my dear sir?"

"Because my consent is first necessary, and will not be given till——"

He hesitated, awaiting to complete the phrase.

"He is first settled with," thought the lawyer. "I imagined as much."

"Let us start for the village," added Mr. Silex. "Do your best in this affair, sift the evidence to the utmost; and that done, we will speak further—perhaps on the affair of the entail."

"As you please, my dear sir, as you please," answered Mr. Marshall. "I shall feel only too happy to serve you. Never do anything without the advice of your lawyer," he added, "never."

"For the future I will not."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

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GOOD ADVICE.

Eat only what is proper food,
Drink only that which does you good,
Spend only what you can afford,
Lend only what will be restored—
Then you will have no cause to say,
"I was a fool on yesterday!"

ADVENTURE OF A PHYSICIAN.

BY EMERSON BENNETT

Doctor Lefebre—for so I choose to call him—was, in his early days, a surgeon in the French army, under Napoleon the First. After the fall of the great hero of Austerlitz, Marengo, and a hundred other battles, Doctor Lefebre left France and came to America. He located himself in the city of New York, set up practice, and, in the course of a few years, became quite successful. Subsequently he removed to Montreal, Canada, and there died; but a short time before his death, he related to a friend the following remarkable story.

In the summer of 1832 (said the Doctor) I was in the pursuit of my profession in the American metropolis. It was during the cholera visitation, and hundreds and thousands were rapidly falling beneath that devastating scourge. It was in the hight of the season, and I was completely worn down with excessive labor. For weeks I had had no regular sleep; night and day the calls for me had been continual. Setting out early in the morning, I would sometimes not return till late at night, being continually intercepted on my way; and then I would find a startling row of names upon my slate, with the most earnest appeals for my immediate attention. If I visited any of these, I always selected a few of the last on the list—for I knew the others had either procured another physician, were convalescent, or past my skill—so rapidly did the destroyer work. My friend, it was indeed a terrible time; and if I should relate to you one tithe of the scenes of suffering and misery I witnessed, I should fill your mind with images of horror.

Let that pass. I have quite a different story to tell. What I wish to say is, that, during the hight of the epidemic, I met with an adventure so very remarkable, that, for days and weeks afterwards, I could not throw it from my thoughts, sleeping or waking. It was about eleven o'clock one dark, stormy night, that, having left the deathbed of a personal friend, I returned to my dwelling in a most gloomy frame of mind, fully resolved to take to my bed, without looking at my list at all, and be seen no more till the following day. Nature absolutely demanded this rest, and I felt it was due to my safety.

But on the steps I encountered a man who had been waiting for me. It was dark, for the flaring street lamp was somewhat distant, and I could not have recognized him had he been an acquaintance, and his face fully exposed. But it was not. A slouched hat was pressed down low on his forehead, and the rest of his features were nearly concealed by the broad collar of his coat, which was drawn up around them. This, however, was natural, for it was a stormy night, and excited no suspicion.

"Dr. Lefebre," he said, "I have been impatiently awaiting your return. You must come with me. It is a case of desperate importance."

"I could not go if it were my own brother," I replied.

"You must, Doctor!" he rejoined, in a positive tone. "Come! I have a carriage in waiting, which shall take and bring you. An hour of your time may be all that is necessary."

"I cannot, I am exhausted," I said, attempting to pass him on the steps. "I must have sleep, or I shall die. My brain is becoming diseased, like that of one who has drunk too long and too deeply."

"You shall not refuse me, Doctor!" he persisted. "Here is gold, sir—gold—the Archimedean lever that moves the world!"

As he spoke he seized my hand, and, before I could withdraw it, had literally filled it with gold.

"There," he pursued, "you are paid, and now you cannot refuse!"

"Well, where is your carriage?" I impatiently demanded.

"One moment, Doctor!"

He blew a kind of boatswain's whistle, and mediately after a coach and span of horses came dashing round the nearest corner, and drew up at the steps. I did not pause to consider the peculiarity of the matter—I was not in a condition to think—but, with my unknown visitant, hastened to enter the vehicle. We were driven rapidly through the city, through one street after another, for nearly half an hour.

At last, with a short, jerking turn, as if whirled into a court-yard, he stopped suddenly. Instantly the door of the coach was thrown open, and my companion sprang out, exclaiming:

"Quick, Doctor, we have not a moment to lose."

As I was in the act of descending the steps, and ere I had time to look around me, a long, heavy mantle was thrown over my head and shoulders, and belted around my waist. I was then seized by two men, one on either side, and hurried forward into some sort of a building, and through what appeared to be many winding passages, and thence down a long flight of steps, which I was sure, from the change of the atmosphere, led deep beneath the surface of the ground.

I did not feel altogether at ease, but I suffered my conductors to proceed without question. In fact, I knew inquiry could avail me nothing. If it was their design to murder me, I was in their power, and could not help myself. If they were seeking to mystify me, they would give no explanation. So I kept silent—made no resistance—showed no fear or hesitation.

Having reached the bottom of the steps, we seemed to pass through a long, paved passage, and then entered directly upon hard-trodden ground, over which we continued to walk rapidly for some five or ten minutes, through what I conjectured to be an underground tunnel. This, however, was only conjecture; for my companions, being on either side of me, prevented me from touching anything like a wall, and therefore I could not be certain whether we were passing through a tunnel, or up and down and around a large vault.

At length we again came to steps, and ascending them, hurried through a few more passages, and entered a lighted room.

"Doctor," now spoke one of my two companions, "whatever you may see or hear, you must never reveal, while you place any value on your life! We do not intend to harm you—we have brought you here for another purpose. We have need of you in a critical case. We know you possess great surgical skill—for you were named to us by Dr. M****, who died to-day."

"Mon Dieu!" exclaimed I, speaking for the first time. "Is Doctor M**** dead?"

I had met him only the day before, and he was then in good health.

"Another victim of the pestilence!" said my informant. "Were he living, we should not have sent for you. But we waste time. You understand that nothing you discover is to be revealed?"

"I understand my Hippocratean oath," I replied.

Instantly the mantle was removed, and I found myself surrounded by six men, each disguised with mask and robe of black. The room was handsomely furnished, with crimson tapestry entirely covering the walls and doors, and windows if there were any.

"I do not know if a stimulant will tend to make your strong nerves more steady," said the same voice which had before addressed me; "but if you think so, there are wines of every name, and liquors of every kind."

He pointed as he spoke to a long side-board, containing two rows of bottles, and tumblers to match. I did indeed feel in need of something of the kind, not so much from fear as from exhaustion. I therefore stepped to the side-board, selected to my taste, and drank.

"Now, gentlemen," I said, "I am ready for anything honorable."

At this he who seemed to be the leader of the party immediately conducted me into an adjoining room, through a door behind the tapestry. The second room was furnished much like the first, but hung with green. We passed through this in the same manner, into the third, which was hung with purple. This last, unlike the others, contained a bed, and on the bed lay a masked figure, groaning with pain. Two others, likewise masked, apparently females, were sitting beside him, one of them holding his hand. Three of the first party of masks followed me into the room. The door was then closed, and I heard the lock turn.

"Proceed, Doctor, to examine the wound of yonder gentleman," said the spokesman.

The two masked figures at the bedside instantly drew back, and the others formed a kind of semi-circle around me. Without any apparent surprise or hesitation I prepared for the task before me. Turning down the coverlet, I discovered a dangerous gun-shot wound in the left groin, the ball having made its lodgment at a most critical point. It was necessary to extract it at once; and while in the act of probing for it, the agony of the wounded man became so intense and unbearable, that he threw up his hands with a shriek, and, catching his fingers under the mask, tore it from his face.

I started—I could not help it—for the bright light, which now shone clearly upon his features, revealed the countenance of one I had often met in the highest circles of fashion. Instantly each man around me drew a knife, and, seizing me violently, hurled me back upon a kind of lounge, and then stood over me, as if waiting a signal to strike.

"What means this, genlemen?" I said, in as quiet and cool a tone as I could command.

"You have penetrated a portion of our secret," said he who had before been the spokesman, "and we are not certain it will rest safely in your breast."

"You satisfy me!" I returned; "I have discovered no secret, except that I know now who the wounded man is. But what matters that? I can proceed to dress his wound as carefully as if he were a stranger."

"Can he live, Doctor?" demanded the other.

"There is a bare possibility—nothing more. Much will depend upon the amount of inflammation that may supervene, his own mental excitement, and the care he may receive."

"Then, Doctor, you must swear, by all you hold sacred, that never, under any circumstances whatever, you will make mention of the name of your patient in connection with this affair."

"Most willingly," I replied; "though I admit I am in the dark as to your motives for this."

"You may not always remain in the dark—but certainly we shall not enlighten you. There are reasons; and that is enough. And remember, if you break your oath, you are as certain of assassination, be you where you may, as that you are now within our power! Are you satisfied, gentlemen?" he added, turning to his companions.

Each man bowed assent, and sheathed his knife.

"Then proceed, Doctor," said the leader, "and do the best you can. If you save him, great shall be your reward; but whether he lives or dies, you shall be well remunerated for your services to-night."

"Nay," said I, "I have already been well rewarded—my hands were filled with gold before I came."

"Oh," said the other, "that is nothing. Be not surprised if you some day receive an hundred times that amount. We are gentlemen of means, and can pay liberally all who serve us. Go on with your work; and consider yourself bound to assist us, should we again have need of you. Whoever we may send to you, that whispers in your ear the name of the wounded man, must be entitled to claim you instantly, even if he takes you from the deathbed of a friend."

I merely nodded assent, and resumed my occupation of extracting the ball, which I succeeded in doing in the course of the next half hour, amid the shrieks and groans of the patient. I then bandaged the wound; and having written a prescription, and given some necessary directions, I announced myself as ready to depart.

"You must suffer yourself to be blindfolded, Doctor," said the same voice which had all along addressed me.

"I am in your hands, getlemen," I replied—"do with me as you see proper—only let me reach home as speedily as you can, for I am worn down with over-labor and want of rest."

"We will not detain you a moment longer than is necessary," returned the other.

Immediately two of the masks produced a padded bandage, which seemed to have been prepared for the purpose; and having bound it over my eyes so that I could not distinguish light from darkness, they again threw over my head the long mantle.

I was then taken from the room in the same manner I had been brought into it, and apparently conducted through the same winding passages, and underground tunnel, back to the place where I had quitted the carriage. The latter was in waiting; and having entered it with my two companions, who seemed determined to keep me blinded until beyond the possibility of recognizing the locality, we were again driven rapidly through one street after another, the storm still raging as furiously as ever.

At last we stopped, the door was opened, the mantle and bandage removed, and a muffled and evidently disguised voice informed me that I was at liberty to depart. As this was said the speaker gave me his hand, as if to assist me down the steps, and on withdrawing it I found he had left in mine a folded paper. The next moment the door was closed with a bang; and the carriage dashing rapidly away, disappeared around the nearest corner.

At first I was bewildered, and could not make out where I was; but I soon discovered I had been set down in a narrow back street, some half a dozen squares from my own door. I hurried homeward through the storm, and, on reaching my dwelling, examined the paper left in my hand, which I found to contain two fifty dollar bank-notes, but not a single written word. Musing upon the strangeness of the whole adventure, I retired at once to bed, but did not get asleep for some two or three hours, and only then by my mental faculties being overcome by wearied nature.

The next day, on looking over one of the morning journals, which contained a full account of the ravages of the epidemic, my eye fell upon an article which I believed to be a key to the mystery in which I had been involved. After the usual flourishes of an excited reporter, it went on to say that on the evening before, between the hours of nine and ten, as one of the city watch was passing the ***** Bank, he was startled by the report of fire-arms, followed by one or two calls for help, and a shuffling sound as of persons struggling within. Instantly giving the signal of alarm, he ran to the rear of the building, where he was met by some four or five men, with masks upon their faces, who were hurrying down the steps, bearing among them what appeared to be a wounded companion. On seeing them, two of this party instantly sprung from among the others, and, before he had time to act, laid him senseless upon the ground, inflicting a very serious wound upon his head, apparently with some blunt instrument. The alarm, which he had previously sounded, soon brought several others to the spot; and on entering the bank, the rear door of which was standing open, they found the private watch dead, lying in a pool of his own blood, his two pistols beside him, and both discharged. He had not only been foully murdered, but also horribly mutilated, not less than a dozen or twenty cuts and stabs having been inflicted upon his face and body. No clue, the paper stated, had been found to the burglars and murderers—who evidently belonged to a large and organized gang of desperadoes—except that a close carriage, which might have contained the wounded man, had about the time of the alarm been seen to leave the neighborhood, and drive rapidly through some of the smaller streets, taking an uptown direction. The writer added that the police were on the alert, and it was thought the bloody villains would soon be brought to justice; and an earnest demand was made upon any physician who might be called to visit a wounded man, to at once lay information before the police, that some additional trace might be discovered of the inhuman perpetrators of the bloody act.

There were many other remarks and suggestions, which I need not repeat. Suffice it to say, that for several days afterward all the journals teemed with details of the bloody deed, and speculations upon its mystery. But no certain clue was ever found to the actors in that tragic drama; and for reasons already given I kept my own secret. Whether the wounded man recovered or died, I never knew, nor who were his accomplices; but the whole transaction produced a very unpleasant effect upon my nerves, and for weeks I was in continual dread of being again summoned to take what might be considered a criminal part in the affair.

It is my belief that the whole gang—like the wounded man whom I knew—moved in the higher circles of wealth and fashion; and the fact that a few years later there were some two or three arrests for forgery, of men who had until then maintained untarnished reputations, would seem to corroborate this opinion.

Except what I have related, I know nothing of the matter, and my compulsory oath has never been broken by a mention of the name of him I saw. It may be proper to remind you, my friend, that while I acted, I did not know they were criminals; and it is probably as well for all parties that I was never called upon again. The event had a tendency to make me suspicious of all I met in that city of wealth and fashion, poverty and misery, crime and iniquity; and as soon as I had acquired a competency, I removed hither, where I have some congenial friends, and where I hope to pass the remainder of my days in peace and quiet.

THE NYMPHS OF ANTIQUITY.

The nymphs of antiquity are the gentler powers of the earth, and therefore figured under the shape of beautiful females. A large or violent river had a god to it:—the nymph is ever gentle and sweet. The word signifies a marriageable female. It is traced to a word signifying moisture; and all the nymphs, as a body, are said to have derived their origin from Neptune, or water—the first principle of all things.

Every fountain, every wood, many a single tree, had a nymph to it. An ancient could not stir out of doors, if he was religious, without being conscious that he was surrounded with things supernatural; and thus his religion, though full of beautiful forms, was a different thing to him from what it is to us. The nymph was lovely and beneficent; she took care of her brook or her grove for the agriculturist, and he humbly assisted her in his turn and presented her with flowers: and yet a sight of her was supposed to occasion a particular species of madness, thence called Nympholepsy.

The nymphs passed a happy and graceful life of mingled duty and pleasure, and evinced their benignity to mankind after their respective fashions:—the Nereids in assisting men at sea, and allaying the billows; the Oreads in assisting hunters; the Naiads or Dryads in taking care of the streams and woods; and so on of the rest. They danced and bathed, and made love and played among the trees, and sat tying up their hair by the waters. As they were kind, they expected kindness, and were grateful for it. If their worshipers represented them as severe in their resentments, it was in punishment of what was thought impious; and there is always some inconsistency in those personifications of the natural reaction of error.

MAGNETIC MASKS.

Among the various useful purposes to which magnetism has been applied, the following is not the least serviceable or singular. In needle factories, the workmen who point the needles are constantly exposed to excessively minute particles of steel, which fly from the grindstone and mix, though imperceptible to the eye, as the finest dust in the air, and are imbibed with the breath. The effect is scarcely noticed on a short exposure, but being constantly repeated every day, it produces a constitutional irritation, dependent on the tonic properties of the steel, which is sure to terminate in pulmonary consumption. Persons employed in this business, used scarcely ever to attain the age of forty years. In vain was it attempted to purify the air before its entrance into the lungs by gauze or linen guards; but the dust was too fine and penetrating to be obstructed by such coarse expedients. At length some ingenious person bethought him of that wonderful power which every child who has reached for its mother's needle with a magnet is acquainted with. Masks of magnetized steel wire are now constructed and adapted to the faces of the workmen. By these the air is not merely strained, but searched in its passage through them, and each obnoxious atom arrested and removed.

DECISIVE INTEGRITY.

The man who is so conscious of the rectitude of his intentions as to be willing to open his bosom to the inspection of the world, is in possession of one of the strongest pillars of a decided character. The course of such a man will be firm and steady, because he has nothing to fear from the world, and is sure of the approbation and support of Heaven. While he who is conscious of secret or dark designs, which, if known, would blast him, is perpetually shrinking and dodging from public observation, and is afraid of all around him, and much more, of all above him. The clear, unclouded brow, the open countenance, the brilliant eye, which can look an honest man in the face, the healthfully beating heart, and the firm, elastic step, belong to him whose bosom is free from guile, and who knows that all motives and purposes are pure and right. Why should such a man falter in his course? He may be slandered, he may be deserted by the world, but he has that within which will keep him erect, and enable him to move onward on his course, with his eyes fixed on Heaven, which he knows will not desert him.

THE STUDENT'S DEFENSE.

Who has a right to blame me if that time which other men are wont to bestow upon festivals and shows—upon grosser and meaner pleasures, or even upon the rest and relaxation of body and mind; if as much time as they give to convivial feasts, to their sports, or to the gaming-table, so much have I given to letters and philosophy? Other studies belong to particular times, or places, or callings, or periods of life alone; but these nourish and strengthen the youthful mind, they please and soothe old age. They delight at home, they are useful abroad. They are with us and about us, by day and by night, on the road and in fields.

HOW TO SPOIL A GIRL.

Tell her she is a little lady, and must not run, and make her a sun-bonnet a yard deep, to keep her from tanning. Do not let her play with her boy cousins, "they are so rude." Tell her not to speak loud, it is so masculine; and that loud laughing is quite ungenteel. Teach her music, but never mind her spelling. Give her ear-rings at six years of age. Teach her to set her cap for the beaux at eleven. And after your pains-taking, if she does not grow up a simpering, unreflecting nobody, that cannot answer a love-letter without some smart old aunt to help her, give her up—she is past all remedy.

ACTION AND PRAYER.—That was a wise man who said: He that acts towards men, as if God saw him, and prays to God as if men heard him, although he may not obtain all he asks, or succeed in all that he undertakes, will most probably deserve to do so.

TO MARY REED.

BY H. A. MOORE.

My Mary, many changeful years,
With all their smiles and all their tears,
With all their hopes and joys have past,
Like dreams, since I beheld thee last.
I am the child you loved no more,
And my light-hearted youth is o'er;
The eyes whose brightness won your praise,
Have quenched in floods of tears their rays;
And on the temples, once so fair,
Shines many a thread of silver hair;
And the young limbs that could not go
With any motion staid or slow,
Now bear me onward, sad and sage,
O'er the dull path of middle age.
Mary, your childhood's loving mate
Hath proved a strangely varied fate;
Hath wrestled oft with wasting care,
And hungry want, and cold despair;
But by God's grace her own right hand
Hath earned her place and power to stand,
Companion of the high and strong,
Acknowledged as a child of song.
She hath been hated and maligned
By whom she *thought* were true and kind,
Been sought, and honored, and caressed,
As dearest friend, and welcome guest.
By whom were once but as a name
Sounding from the high hills of fame;
But weary, poor, and desolate,
Or gay amid the rich and great,
Mary, her heart was ne'er untrue
To her glad childhood's love for you.
I never think of you, beloved,
But other memories are moved.
I see my long-lost mother's smile,
And hear her loving voice the while,
And through the years I backward glide.
To sit with Mary, at her side,
And dream that thou and I once more
Are children, as we were of yore.

THE SISTER OF CHARITY.

BY CORA BELL.

It was the year 1789, in Paris—the fierce struggle between aristocratic pride and the mighty indignation of a people stung to madness by years of cruelty, injustice, and that mortal misery which eat into the very vitals of the poor, was at its hight—blood flowed in torrents, and to pull down Tyranny, and erect pure and holy Liberty upon her pedestal, men became demons. Every law, human or divine, was scoffed at and derided; every obligation, social or moral, trampled down and extinguished. The groans and cries of a great living anguish seemed to have appealed in vain to God and humanity; now fanaticism and infidelity were rampant, and the people refused to worship the same Deity that their persecutors had so often bowed the knee in idle mockery before. It was the excesses of an army after a hard-won victory; the intoxication of a great success; the excitement of long suffering nature re-assuming her usurped rights.

In one of the obscure by-streets that lead from the straggling Rue St. Honore, on a summer's evening, a woman dressed in the long black mantle, close-shaped bonnet, and coarse *sabots* of a Sister of Charity, was walking rapidly along. With downcast eyes, and scarcely noticing any object around her, she glided quietly, yet mechanically, through the dense riotous masses that thronged the street, attracting little or no observation, for these gentle, pious women, whose lives of poverty, suffering, and sublime devotion were written on their pale, emaciated faces, were almost the only class of *religieuse* who were toleaated in the year one and two of the Republic. To wipe the dew of agony from the brow of expiring humanity, to bind up foul and loathsome wounds, to encounter the diseases of hospitals and prisons in their most ghastly and appalling forms, to starve, lie on the cold ground or damp straw, to have no certain dwelling place, was sorrow and privation sufficient to encounter, and not even the direst enemy of religion seemed inclined to inflict any more upon them.

The nun walked on until she reached the top of the street. She stopped for a moment, raised her vail, and glanced furtively around. At this moment a stout country girl, carrying a basket of flowers and vegetables, issued from a small, mean-looking house on the opposite side of the street. Both parties glanced keenly at each other, and though the nun walked on without stopping, a close observer might have detected that the girl had made some peculiar, cabalistic sign with the fingers of her left hand which had been returned by the Sister of Charity in the same manner.

Sometimes abreast, at other times in advance of the flower girl, the Sister of Charity moved on through several streets. They stopped before a large, handsomely-built mansion, the rear of which faced the narrow street they were in, and the country girl looking cautiously around, for the first time addressed her companion. They turned into a lane formed by the high brick walls that enclosed the garden of the house, and that of the opposite mansion, separating them from each other, though the tall poplars that had shot over the walls still mingled their branches in friendly companionship. Though half hidden by the graceful foliage of the trees that surrounded it, the outside of the mansion was strikingly gloomy and dilapidated, but not more so than was usual in Paris at the time, the greater number of hotels and noble mansions being in ruins, or had been appropriated for dwellings by the most squalid and filthy of the rabble. The roof was broken in several places, the walls beslimed with mud, and fragments of rich velvet curtains still adhered to the sashless windows, and waving mournfully in the evening breeze, seemed to indicate that no earthly inhabitant moved within.

The two women passed up nearly to the top of the alley until stopped by the rear of a large monastic building, which seemed as if it, too, was deserted, the walls being blackened and charred in several places, as if an attempt had been made to set fire to it. The lane was filled with rubbish—old bottles and the remains of garden cleaning, for which purpose it seemed intended, for a flight of steps here and there, on either side, led down into little gates or wickets in the wall. Descending a flight of these steps at the right hand side of the old convent, the country girl applied a key to the small door, which was sunk so low in the ground that the top of it was scarcely visible from the lane, and admitted herself and companion, cautiously securing the gate after them.

The nun fetched a deep, suppressed breath, as they found themselves treading the grass-grown walks of a long deserted garden, or rather series of grounds, for they skirted the mansion on either side, then formed a square of parterres in front. She would have seated herself on the remnant of a broken bench, beneath one of the trees, but her companion said firmly, but respectfully—

"Not there, madame; we can be seen from the back windows in the opposite street."

They moved on, now and then pausing to push aside the overgrown branches of oleander and laurel which still flourished amid the general decay. The nun now and then cast a melancholy glance around her, as if memory recognized the scene, and had conjured other and happier days spent in that deserted garden. The girl opened a small gate near the house, and they descended a steep flight of steps that led into a large, paved court-yard, ceiled overhead, and from the numerous grated cellar windows that looked into it appeared a kind of covered yard, used for washing, keeping wood, and other household purposes. The girl put down the heavy basket which she had all along held on her arm, and the nun and she seated themselves on the lower step.

The sister took up a bunch of brilliant roses, and inhaling the perfume, she said, in a low, musical voice—

"Are these for poor Vernet, Marie? How is he now?"

"Better, madame, but the same old cry still, 'More roses for my wife.' He fancies she is alive yet, and he waters and tends those flowers for her every day. He is happy as long as they remain fresh, but when they begin to wither he calls out again, 'More roses for my wife.'"

The nun sighed.

"I am tired, Marie," said she. "I hope we will not have long to wait." She untied, as she spoke, the heavy crape vail and bonnet, revealing a countenance still so lovely, that it was easy to discern how great must have been the charms of its possessor in happier days. The ripened lip, the rounded cheek, the bloom and freshness of girlhood was gone; but she was yet very young. Dark, raven hair was braided on her pale, classic forehead; a pure and delicate outline of feature, a pensive mouth exquisitely chiseled, and eyes of a deep, liquid blue, in whose shadowy depths love and tenderness seemed to dwell; but there was now a wild, excited expression in them, and a fitful flush upon her cheek, that denoted a heart ill at ease.

"I know you are tired," said the flower girl, whose features, though presenting merely the ordinary characteristics of a French peasant, the quick, dark eye, brown skin, and mobile, piquant physiognomy, were remarkable for an air of gravity and thought not usually seen in persons of her class; "but he will soon be here. He told me that it was better for us to be before him."

"But, Marie, can we depend upon this brother of yours," said the lady. "He belongs not to us, yet he has offered nobly to aid us at the peril of his own life."

"Yes, madame," said the girl, quietly.

The nun glanced keenly at her, then said, bitterly—

"One who is false to God and his king, what pledge can he offer for his fidelity?"

"The Girondists have many such as Paul, who have yet been faithful," replied the girl, gravely. "It is true he is an advocate for liberty—liberty for man to enjoy the fruit of his toil, and to be paid for it as man's labor should be paid for—that the rich should not enjoy all—the poor nothing."

"You speak strangely, girl, for one who has done so much for our cause," said the lady, in a voice whose natural gentleness was slightly tinged with hauteur at the expression of opinions perhaps somewhat at variance with her own.

"I am a member of a society which has for its object the elevation of woman and the diffusion of peace, and I have been true to the vows I have sworn," said the girl, with a dignity of voice and manner little in accordance with the provincial dialect she spoke in.

The nun pressed the girl's hand.

"Forgive me, Marie," she murmured. "I know all the good you have effected, but my brain is warped with sorrow; for weeks I have not slept, and a dry crust and a draught of water was all I could procure for the last two days. But why should I murmur?" continued she, and a flash of enthusiasm lit up her noble countenance, "if I am only spared to be an honored instrument. Your brother, girl—oh! will he do as he said, and his heart not with us?"

"My brother's heart is with *you*," said the girl, looking calmly up in her companion's face. "He loves you, and would die for you."

There was a quick sparkling of those deep, earnest eyes, and a warm, breathing glow suddenly flushed the lady's cheek, but it was not the confusion of love. She drew up her tall, stately form to its full hight, and bit her lip haughtily, as if to restrain the eager, impatient words that were springing to her lips. The girl had noted all these signs, for, with the calm consciousness of one who had much in her power, she had kept her eyes fixed upon the nun's face, as if careless whether her words produced pleasure or disapprobation. "He asks no return for his love. Paul loves you as he would the sun or the bright stars—from childhood you have mingled in his dreams."

"Me!" said the lady, starting. "I know him not." And this time a flush of woman's vanity mounted to her brow. "Who is he, Marie?"

"I will recall him to your memory," said the flower girl. "Go back, lady, some ten years, to the scene of your early youth—a proud palace upon the sunny banks of the Loire. The trees are bright with the rich verdure of summer, purple clusters of the grape hang heavy on the vine, and the merry vintage song is ringing in the fields. It is your birth-day. Just fifteen, beautiful as an angel, you have come from a convent to preside over your brother's home. Among the crowd of admirers that follow the lovely Lady Julie is a poor youth, but a few years older, your brother's foster-brother, the lowly child of a poor peasant, yet kindly treated. The young lord and he have been playmates and friends from childhood—have shared the same studies and mingled in the same sports. Thus honored, the boy dared to raise his eyes to the radiant being whom he said he had seen and thought of in his dreams, long before he had ever seen her. In secret he worshiped her, and strove to anticipate her slightest wish. The brightest flowers, the richest fruits, the rarest birds were daily procured by him, and conveyed to her chamber. Gay, beautiful, and proud of that beauty, the lady with smiles received the homage of the poor rustic youth, until at last, encouraged by her goodness, in a moment of passion he forgot himself, and on that happy fete-day he knelt at the lady's feet, and told his love. She dismissed him with a burst of haughty laughter. That night the young peasant left the stately home that had so long sheltered him, and enlisted as a soldier. Years rolled on, and no more was heard of him until the troubles had broken out. He had risen to fame and wealth, but scorn and hatred had not turned his heart against his early benefactors. It was Paul Lestang that saved the life of the Marquis de Valence, and procured him the means of flight to another land, and now he would serve his sister."

"Is it Paul Lestang that has done this? And are you his sister?" said the nun, hastily. "I remember all, but I was a foolish girl then. I loved no one. Oh! your brother will not, does not think of me now," continued she, half-fearfully.

"I cannot say, lady; but see, here he comes!" exclaimed Marie, whose eyes had been for some time fixed upon the house, as if in expectation of some one's approach from that quarter. Suddenly a hand appeared at the shattered casement opposite to them. A rusty iron shutter was forcibly driven back by inserting the sharp point of a poniard beneath. The next moment a man leaped lightly into the yard. He bowed respectfully, removed a small Phrygian cap adorned with the tri-color, and spoke some words in a low voice to the girl Marie.

"This is Paul, madame," said she, turning to the nun.

The lady cast one keen, searching glance at the stranger; it seemed as if her whole being was centered in that glance, and by it she seemed to measure the mental calibre of the man. Her inquisition was favorable; it could not be otherwise, for nature seemed to have stamped the credentials of honor and integrity upon that frank, open countenance, those sincere and truthful eyes.

"What am I to do, madame?" said the young man, in a voice whose full, rich tones fell like a pleasant melody upon the ear, and he gazed with eager, mournful interest into the fair face before him.

"Oh, sir," said the lady, earnestly, "aid me in this matter, I beseech you. Marie has told you, she says, of those papers. I pledge my honor that there will be nothing in them contrary to your principles. They contain but an appeal for mercy for a once honored and anointed head, and the secret password of that society to which your sister and I belong. The execution of the king, we hear, is decided on, but there are over five hundred influential citizens who are determined to cry out for pardon, or effect a rescue, even at the scaffold. But union and consolidation are necessary. All must cry out—all must be prepared for action. To do this each member must know he will be supported, and for that purpose a sign will be given, which all will recognize, for there must be no timidity—no indecision. I do not know whether I have explained myself right. Monsieur, will you assist us in dispersing those papers? Here is a list of the names."

Paul Lestang cast an impassioned glance upon the speaker's animated countenance. He did not immediately reply, but seemed weighing the probable result of the enterprise in his mind.

He shook his head after a moment's silence, and said—

"There is some reason in the plan, but if only a few of the number have courage to cry out for pardon, they will be massacred, torn to pieces, and Louis Capet—and the king, too"—the latter words were said hurriedly, as if in deference to the lady's predilection. "But these papers—when can I have them? There is no time to lose."

"I could have brought them to-night, but there is a person who will"—she stopped suddenly, as if fearful she had said too much.

"You may confide in me freely, madame," said Paul. "I am determined to help you as far as I can, not only because I deplore the blood that has been so madly shed, but that I would die to obey your lightest command."

The lady bowed her head gracefully, and though she took no immediate notice of the latter sentence, her voice trembled perceptibly as she again spoke. "To-morrow I will bring the papers."

"Not to-morrow," said the young man, hastily. "Keep, I implore you, in safety to-morrow. Two days after will do."

"There is an old sun-dial at the bottom of the garden," said the nun. "Marie knows it. The moss conceals a spring at the bottom of the pedestal, which, on touching, flies back. It is hollow. In it I will put the papers in two days at farthest; and oh! I implore you"—her voice faltered, her breathing became quick and heavy, she clasped her small hands together, and looked imploringly in the young man's face, "by the memory of all you have ever loved or honored ere these dreadful days, to deal fairly by me. It is not for one life I plead—the lives of hundreds are at stake. Be faithful, Paul Lestang, and if God pleases to take pity on us, there is nothing that you may not command from my gratitude. Marie has told me all; I know the debt of gratitude I already owe you. I cannot love you, Paul, for I have loved once—and though *he* has passed away, my heart will never forget its allegiance to him—but still, if the possession of this poor hand can repay your devotion, it shall be yours."

Oh, love—strange, mystic love! even for those cold words he could have worshiped her: the dream of his youth would yet be accomplished—she, who he had thought and dreamed of all these long years from boyhood to mature manhood, would yet be his!—oh! she would learn to love him——

In a delirium of passion, the man flung himself at her feet, and pressing his lips to the hem of her robe, poured forth his incoherent thanks.

"Fear not, dear lady!" he exclaimed. "I swear by *yourself* that no tortures shall wrest this secret from my lips! and I will die, or accomplish your desires!"

They reached the alley in safety, and avoiding the more crowded streets, entered the Louvre, which communicated by several gates with the Rue St. Honore and other streets. These gates had been flung down, and the spacious grounds, unconfined by fence or palisade, were now open to the public. Paul, carrying the precious basket of flowers, and letting the females precede him a little in advance, made nearly the circuit of the gardens, until they suddenly entered a crowded street, which opened upon the boulevards. Followed by their vigilant protector, the nun and her companion glided through the riotous groups that lined the pavements with an ease and self-possession which seemed to say scenes of violence and danger were no strangers to them. But their progress was suddenly obstructed by an immense crowd, assembled in front of a dark, old-fashioned mansion. The windows were smashed, and the hall-door had been torn off the hinges. The building was filled with some of the mob, who were engaged in flinging out the rich furniture to those assembled in the court-yard below. A convulsive shudder shook the limbs of the nun—she caught the arm of Marie, and murmured—

"Oh, God! my uncle's house!"

"Paul!" said Marie, hurriedly.

The young man sprang forward, and relinquishing his basket to his sister, he supported the almost lifeless form of the nun. Suddenly a succession of piercing shrieks rose on the still evening air. She started, and clung convulsively to her protector, who by dint of blows and shouts had succeeded in obtaining standing-room against the overwhelming rush of the mob, some of whom were busy flinging stones into the windows, others had climbed up the stone statues that surmounted the gateway, and with shouts and yells directed the work of slaughter and devastation going on within. Mirrors, silken couches, cabinets, and rare pictures in gorgeous frames were hurled in succession into the street. A man appeared at one of the windows of the upper salon. He was a most ferocious looking wretch—his arms and hands were literally dripping with human gore; he held a heavy ax in his hand, with which he dashed out the remainder of the sash. He then waved his arm, and a man bearing a heavy burden staggered forward. It was the headless form of a woman. The deed of horror seemed to have been recently perpetrated, for the blood flowed in torrents from the neck; he bent over the window, and with a frenzied yell flung the body into the midst of the crowd below.

At this moment the mob which filled the hall and great staircase rushed back into the court-yard; they were followed by a troop of the municipal guards, dragging, or rather carrying, the lifeless form of a young girl, and a tall, majestic looking old man, who appeared to be an invalid; he was dressed in a crimson silk *robe de chambre*, richly trimmed with fur, the heavy drapery of which seemed as if folded round the fleshless limbs of a skeleton. His thin, silver hair flowed back from his hollow temples, and displayed a set of high, thin features, which, though pale and worn from long sickness, were remarkable for their expression of all-mastering and overboiling pride. There was a volcano of passion and energy, too, in the glance of those dark eyes, as, drawing himself up to his full hight, he gazed haughtily around him. But even those proud patrician orbs quailed, and were shudderingly averted, not probably from the instinct of personal danger, but from the sudden contact with such apalling misery, crime, and wretchedness as were visibly present there. It was indeed a fearful sight—a terrible mob! Hungry, naked, squalid wretches, come from damp, underground cellars—from narrow, filthy lanes, and reeking, noisome alleys, where pestilence stalked unnoted; from garret, from prison—from every den of human misery—hollow-eyed, ghastly women, fluttering with rags, disease and hunger stamped upon their sharp, emaciated features—the branded thief—the honest poor—the praticed mendicant—the toiling artizan, who had not been able to supply the craving wants of nature for himself and offspring by the unremitting efforts of a life-long labor—had risen in all the majesty of outraged humanity, *stung to madness* by present misery and the remembrance of years of persecution and oppression.

The sea of wild, excited human faces gazed a moment in silence, as if momentarily awed by the haughty, indignant glance of the nobleman, and glutted already with carnage, they would have probably spared his life, had not the *gens-d'armes* surrounded him with drawn sabres, crying, "Stop, citizens! We have arrested the *ci-devant* Marquis de Livraux, and he is to be tried by the Convention." A hoarse murmur of disapprobation agitated the crowd. It swelled to the roar of a torrent. "*Vive la liberte!* He shall be tried by the people!" burst from a thousand throats; the foremost swords were dashed to the ground, the rest fell back—and the old man stood alone! Paul Lestang's tall form towered above the crowd, and though the dense masses pressed quickly in front of him, he could perceive that the young girl had flung herself as a child before the old man, and her passionate appeals for mercy were distinctly audible. Pale, passionless as a marble statue the sister of charity stood beside Paul. Mortal agony was depicted on her features, yet not a murmur or exclamation escaped her lips.

Again compassion seemed to touch the mob. They waver; at this moment a black of colossal stature, naked to the waist, his face and body smeared with gore, dashed forward with a yell. He brandished a huge ax.

"Sacre, my braves! I know this de Livraux. He is the infernal wolf that steals all the white children of Paris, and sends them to his plantation! I saw him at St. Domingo, and they said he killed one every day, and took a bath in the blood!"

This monstrous fiction, based on a popular superstition, received implicit credence, and agitated the excited mob almost to frenzy. With wild shrieks, groans, and yells they pressed forward—there was a moment of silence—then a human head, stuck on a pike, was suddenly lifted above the heads of the crowd, and the negro rushed forward, shouting, "*Vive la liberte!*" The gory head, with its white locks floating in the breeze, swept wildly past, followed by the last of the crowd, who, having accomplished their vengeance, with the strange and fitful spirit peculiar to a Parisian mob, now merrily dashed after their leader.

A low, wailing moan, as of intense pain, broke from the lips of the nun, and she fell heavily into the arms of Paul.

Raising the insensible form of her he loved, and closely followed by Marie, the young man moved behind one of the pillars of the gateway. A stone bench stood near by. Resigning her into the arms of his sister, he looked wildly round for water. At this moment the *gens-d'armes* emerged from the court-yard, carrying the insensible form of the young girl, whom they had separated from the mutilated corpse of her father. She seemed scarcely sixteen, and was exquisitely lovely, with a *petite*, child-like figure, and a face of the most innocent and confiding beauty. Her eyes were closed, and her beautiful, fair hair hung disheveled on her white, rounded shoulders.

Though it was nearly dark, Paul hid behind one of the pillars until the last of the party had disappeared.

"There is a fountain of water at the foot of that old statue, at the top of the yard," said the voice of Marie. "Quick! Paul; she is dying."

The young man flew to the spot indicated, and returned with his cap full of the reviving element, with which he almost frantically sprinkled the pallid countenance of the lady.

"Let us leave this before she recovers!" exclaimed Paul. "She will be safe with us to-night."

"No, no," said the girl, decisively; "she will recover presently. We are only to see her to the church of Notre Dame. She will be safe there."

"How!" said Paul, interrogatively; "was she not stopping with her uncle de Livraux?"

Marie shook her head negatively, as she endeavored with her hand to pour a few drops of water between the closed lips of the unfortunate woman. Suddenly she opened her eyes, while a shivering convulsion shook her frame. She gazed round; all was silent and deserted in the street, but the glimmering light of a lamp suspended over the gateway fell upon the rifled, dilapidated old mansion, which looked in the gloom and solitude as if mourning the fond and happy hearts it so long had sheltered.

With wonderful self-possession, the lady rallied from the stupor of grief and horror which seemed momentarily to have deprived her of all consciousness, but her whole frame shook with emotion, and betrayed how powerful was her affliction. Twice she rejected with haughty impatience Paul's tenderly proffered arm; then when she staggered from weakness she caught it, and clung to him eagerly, now lifting her eyes to his face, and gazing at him with imploring earnestness, now enjoining him to remember his promise. They passed through a number of obscure and dimly-lighted streets, in order to avoid the great thoroughfares, crossed the Pont Neuf, and turning into the Quay des Orfeveres, found themselves before the ancient cathedral of Notre Dame. The moon had arisen, and its beams fell softly on the ancient edifice, shedding a stream of solemn radiance upon its deep, mullioned windows, its numberless pillars, angels, goblins, and all the pile of quaint fanciful trifles that ornament its venerable front. They had reached the side of the building when a tall figure glided from behind one of the pillars, looked steadfastly at the party, and muttered some words which were responded to by the lady. Pressing the hand of Paul, she took the man's arm and they disappeared into the church.

* * * * * * *

In a small cell within the gloomy prison of the Conciergerie, a young man paces to and fro in a storm of agony and horror. It is Paul Lestang—he has been discovered removing the papers from their concealment, and now like a caged and wounded lion he dashes himself madly against the walls of his prison. He would fall—but his beloved marchioness would never know it, and she would curse him as a traitor.

Suddenly the dungeon opened, admitting a faint ray of light into the gloomy cell. The young man bounded from the floor, on which he had dashed himself in a paroxysm of rage and grief.

A gen-d'arms entered.

"Is the hour arrived for my death!" exclaimed he, bitterly.

The man nodded his head with brutal indifference; at the same moment the clang of iron bolts and opening doors, mingled with faint shrieks, curses and a burst of violent weeping was heard—then the tramp of many feet echoed along the vaulted floor, and in a few moments groups of wretched beings issued from the cells of the different passages.

The gray dawn of morning was slowly disappearing; masses of gold and purple clouds covered the eastern horizon, and hovered like a mighty crown over the lofty domes and spires of the city. Even at that early hour groups of wild, reckless wretches, scum and refuse of the city, thirsting for blood, were congregated before the prison gates. With a yell of triumph they greeted the appearance of the poor victims as they ascended the car, (a huge wooden stage upon wheels, painted a fiery red;) the daylight, as it fell upon their soiled, haggard faces, revealed the very depth of human misery. One by one, young and old continued to ascend until the car almost bent beneath their weight.

Motionless, erect, his dark eyes sparkling with a gloomy joy, Paul Lestang stood in the midst of the crowd. Suddenly the progress of the cart was arrested by a concourse of people assembled in the street, and upon the steps of the church of St. Roche. This spot, on the direct route to the guillotine, was a favorite stand of the enraged people. Here they detained for hours the miserable beings led past to execution, pointed out the miseries they had caused, and loaded them with abuse and execration, the last bitter dregs in their cup of sorrow.

Paul started. In the midst of the vast crowd below the steps stood a death-cart; it contained, strange to say, but one occupant, a female form, dressed in the sombre robes of a Sister of Charity. The face was hidden, but the stature and *contour* of the figure, the noble air, he felt, by some magnetic instinct, were those of his beloved. Though he had himself entered the valley of the shadow of death, the horrible possibility brought a sick faintness over him. His frame shook with intense agony, and he would have fallen but for the pressure of his companions. With the mild meekness of a martyr, the tortured victim stood with her white, slender hands clasped together, and her head *bowed upon her bosom, listening to the torrent* of revilings that ever and anon burst from the mob. One hoarse shout, one demoniac yell more, and the cart was suffered to go on. The figure raised its bowed head, and cast a glance of divine compassion upon the fierce multitude. Oh, God! he was not mistaken; it was his own, his beautiful Julie. Oh! if she could recognize him—if she could see that he had kept his vow, and that his spirit was about to join her own. He tried to call aloud, but a leaden weight seemed to paralyze his tongue.

As Paul thus gazed, a number of the crowd drew near the death-cart, and one of them, a villainous-looking wretch, after reviling the helpless nun, struck her a violent blow on the face. Maddened by the sight, Paul, with a maniac's strength, burst his bonds, and leaping from the car, wrenched an ax from the grasp of one of the mob, and dashing the crowd to the right and left, rushed to the side of his adored mistress. Lifting her in his mighty arm, as though she had been an infant, he dashed into the midst of the crowd, which surged around him with deafening yells and shouts of revenge. His onset was so sudden that he had nearly hewn his way clear of the mob before they recovered from their surprise. But before he had got entirely clear, their self-possession returned, and with terrible yells of vengeance they closed around him. Sticks and stones hailed upon his devoted head, and knives and daggers pierced and hacked his body. The report of a pistol rang out upon the din, and Julie exclaimed, "Oh, my God! *Dear* Paul, I am shot!" At that moment, the heroic lover received a deadly thrust from a lance, and sank to the earth with Julie still clasped in his arms. With an expiring effort, he pressed his lips to hers, which feebly answered the caress; and thus they died.

The infuriated mob cut off their heads, and paraded them on pikes, shouted "*Vive la Liberte!*"

OVER-FASTIDIOUS PEOPLE.

There is often a very keen annoyance suffered by sensitive and high-minded people, arising from dissatisfaction with their own work. We should be sorry to say anything that would seem like encouragement to slight or unconscientious working, but to the anxious, truth-seeking, high-minded, fastidious man, we would sometimes venture to say, "My good friend, if we could work out our ideal, we should be angels. There is eternity to do it in. But now come down from your pedestal, and do not overfret yourself, because your hand, or your mind, or your soul will not fulfil all that you would have it. There have been men before you, and probably will come others after you, whose deeds, however much approved by the general voice, seemed, or will seem, to the men themselves, little better than a caricature of their aspirations."

INDOLENCE.—If industry is no more than habit, 'tis, at least, an excellent one. "If you ask me what is the real hereditary sin of human nature, do you imagine I shall answer pride, or luxury, or ambition, or egotism?—No; I shall say Indolence. Who conquers indolence, will conquer all the rest." Indeed, all good principles must stagnate without mental activity.

MAKING A CONFIDANT.—One of the greatest drawbacks upon making any confidence is, that, as regards that topic, you have then lost the royal privilege of beginning the discourse about it yourself; and another can begin to speak to you, or to think (and you know that he is thinking) about the matter, when you do not wish it to be so much as thought of by any one.

THERE is more beauty in the works of a great genius, who is ignorant of all the rules of art, than in the works of a little genius, who not only knows, but scrupulously observes them.

WHAT A FALLEN TREE SAID TO ME.

BY ALICE CARY.

They set me up, and bade me stand
  Beside a dark, dark sea,
In the befogged, low-lying land,
  Of this mortality.

I slipped my roots round the stony soil
  Like rings on the hand of a bride,
And my boughs took hold of the summer's smile
  And grew out green and wide.

Crooked, and shaggy on all sides,
  I was homeliest of trees,
But the cattle rubbed their speckled hides
  Against my knotty knees;

And lambs, in white rows on the grass
  Lay down within my shade,
So I knew, all homely as I was,
  For a good use I was made.

And my contentment served me well—
  My heart grew strong and sweet,
And my shaggy bark cracked off and fell
  In layers at my feet.

I felt when the darkest storm was rife
  The day of its wrath was brief,
And that I drew from the center of life
  The life of my smallest leaf.

At last a woodman came one day
  With axe to a sharp edge ground,
And hewed at my heart till I stood a-sway,
  But I never felt the wound.

I know immortal seed was sown
  Within me at my birth,
And I fell without a single groan,
  With my green face to the earth.

Now all men pity me, and must,
  Who see me lie so low,
But the Power that changes me to dust
  Is the same that made me grow.

DOWN AMONG THE DEAD.

BY AN OLD CONTRIBUTOR.

"Suppose I tell you one of my adventures?" said a venerable French gentleman, by the name of De Lisle, who formed one of a party collected in the splendid saloon of a western steamer, as we sat whiling away our time in relating stories.

To this proposition there was a general and cordial assent; and instantly we became all attention to the aged narrator, who, smoothing back his silvery hair, thus proceeded:

"During that terrible epoch in French history, when a kind of demoniac insanity seemed to have seized upon the whole nation; and those accursed monsters—Marat, Danton, and Robespierre—were denouncing every fair name, cramming the prisons of Paris, and sending the blood-reeking tumbrils, loaded with hundreds and thousands of the best men and women of France to the guillotine; and the equally inhuman, if not more blood-thirsty, Jean Baptiste Carrier, was still more ferociously prosecuting the same bloody acts in Nantes; at that time, I say, I was a young man, and a chance sojourner in the latter city, stopping at the house of a friend.

"One day, being mysteriously informed that my name had been mentioned before the Revolutionary Tribunal—and knowing too well that that was equivalent to a condemnation to death in the most horrid form—I resolved upon an immediate escape. Anticipating something of this nature—for my family, one of the oldest, had ever been staunch adherents of the reigning house—I had brought with me the disguise of a peasant; and hastily putting this on—a clownish wig concealing my natural hair—and soiling my garments and face with dirt, I quietly sallied forth, and took my way to the banks of the Loire, believing that it would be just as well to beard the lion in his den as to attempt escape in any other manner.

"On reaching the river, however, a most horrid spectacle met my view. Not less than three hundred defenceless men, women, and children were being driven, like animals to slaughter, before an armed guard of monsters, to the bank of the stream; where, without regard to their shrieks and piteous appeals for mercy, they were indiscriminately massacred—being shot down, sabred, or forced into the water—where all who escaped bullet and steel were drowned, clinging together in masses.

"Sickened by the sight, and knowing that the same, or a worse, fate would be mine if discovered, I tremblingly hurried forward, but outwardly appeared to be composed and indifferent, for the slightest expression of sympathy was a capital offence against the mad Republic! I had not gone far when two soldiers, hideously stained with the blood of the slain, arrested my steps, and asked me where I was from. I replied, naming an obscure village, and imitating as well as I could the *patois* of the country. They did not seem to be altogether satisfied, and I believe their intention was to arrest me; but fortunately at that moment their attention was called in another direction, to another crowd of prisoners, and they hastily left me.

"I walked quietly on, through one street after another, intending to quit the town at the earliest opportunity; but just as I reached the suburbs, I saw a wild, disorderly procession of citizens and soldiers, coming up the street, having in charge another lot of victims; and fearing I should be compelled to join them, and so perhaps be discovered, I cast about me for some means of escape.

"Fortunately I espied a young and beautiful girl standing in a doorway, to which she had been attracted by the noise in the street; and prompted by the impulse of the moment, I at once advanced to her, and in a polite and deferential tone, said:

"'Mademoiselle, is your heart steeled to pity?'

"She looked surprised, somewhat alarmed, and suddenly drew back, as if to close the door.

"'For God's sake, Mademoiselle, do not shut me out!' I said, in a quick, earnest tone. 'Pray give me shelter! I fear I am pursued, and my life in danger!'

"'Who are you?' she inquired, in a timid, hesitating tone, still keeping the door nearly closed, and herself so drawn back that I could only see her fair face and one white, dimpled hand.

"'I am an unfortunate being,' I replied; 'and if you will permit me to enter before yonder mob draws too near, you will probably save my life, and I will then tell you something of my history. I see by your face you have compassion—and oh! in the name of the saints, give me admittance!'

"'Enter,' she said; and as I hastily did so, she closed and locked the door. 'Now tell me,' she pursued, 'what this means? You are not what you seem?'

"'I will trust you, Mademoiselle,' returned I; 'though, Heaven knows, there are few in France to be trusted now.'

"'More, perhaps, than you think, Monsieur,' she rejoined, as she led the way toward an inner apartment.

"'One word!' said I, seizing her hand and arresting her steps; 'I know by your sweet face I can trust you; but, in the name of all things holy, conceal me from your friends!'

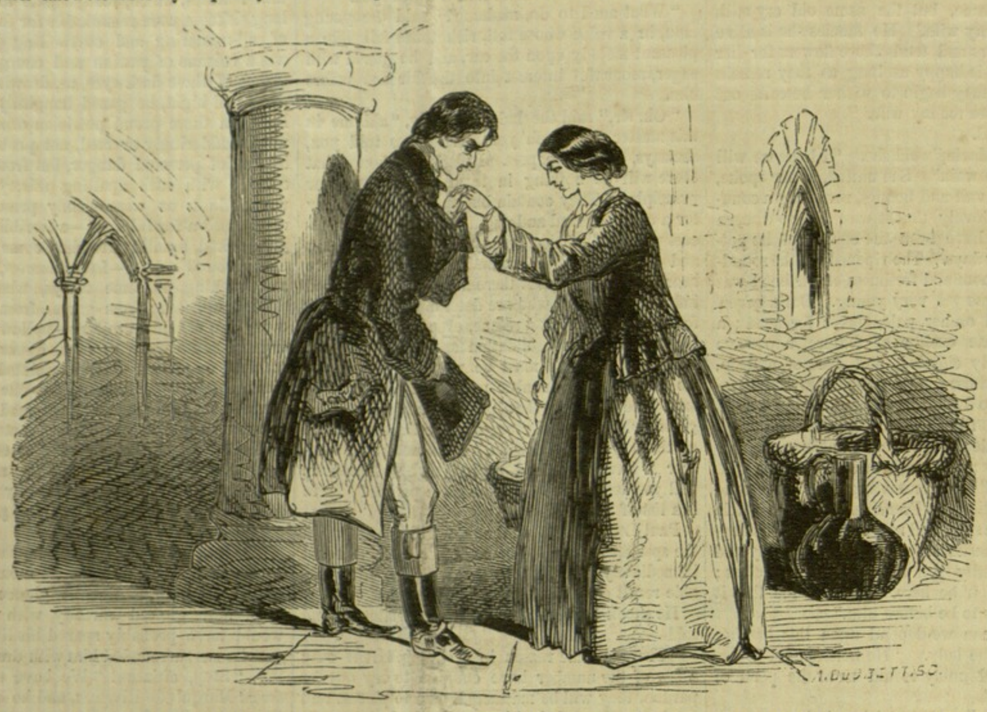
"'There is at present no one in the house but ourselves,' she answered. 'I reside here with my uncle. He is the sexton of the church of Saint Cecile, close at hand. He is now away. I know not, however, what moment he may return.'

"I then hurriedly gave her my name, and informed her that I was a resident of Vannes, who had come to the city on business; and having heard that my name had been mentioned before the Revolutionary Tribunal, I had disguised myself, as she could see, and was attempting to escape; but feared I should not succeed, unless she would give me her assistance.

"'I will do the best I can for you,' she replied; 'but should my uncle discover that you are here, I fear he would give you up to the authorities, and I might myself fall a victim to my hospitality.'

"'Nay,' said I, 'if you think that, let me go forth at once, for I would not for the world endanger you.'

"Marie Sujais—for such I subsequently ascertained her name to be, and also that she was an orphan, adopted by her present uncle—was one of those rare beauties so difficult to describe. She was some eighteen years of age, of a light, airy form, dark hair, soft, lustrous eyes, rather Grecian features, and an expression sweet, modest, and intelligent. As I spoke, she looked earnestly, searchingly, and sympathetically into my face; and then simply saying, 'Follow me,' she led the way down stairs, into a kind of wine-cellar, within which was a small empty closet. Opening this, she inquired if I thought I could exist in there until such time as she could arrange for my escape, which would probably be on the following evening?



"'Anywhere,' said I; 'and may God bless you for your noble heart!'

"Taking her hand, I was about to press it to my lips, with a feeling of gratitude, when we were both suddenly startled by a heavy knocking at the door above.

"'Merciful God!' she exclaimed; 'I fear we are lost! Quick! enter! and keep perfectly quiet!'

"I sprung into the closet, and instantly she closed and locked the door.

"Shortly after I heard a sound of confused voices, and a heavy trampling overhead; and the belief that my pursuers were in search of me, so affected my nerves, that I trembled from head to foot, and the perspiration streamed from every pore. I kept still, however, and listened, with the sense of hearing sharpened by my fears. The voices and trampling sounds continued for some time longer, and then I heard heavy steps descending the stairs.

"'Now,' thought I, 'my time is surely come!'

"Next I heard a sweet, gentle voice, which I instantly recognized as that of the heroic girl, in expostulation with some two or three others, one of whom was her relative.

"'Go back, uncle—go back, gentlemen!' she said. 'Why need you trouble yourselves? I will draw the wine—it will give me pleasure to wait upon you.'

"'You are a beauty!' returned one, in a half drunken tone; 'and I don't know a better Hebe; but I always like to tap the cask myself—I fancy it tastes better at the fountain-head, do you see?'

"'That's my notion, exactly,' said another.

"'Why, Marie,' said her uncle, 'what makes you so anxious to serve us? I hope you have no lover concealed here!'

"With this they all set up a hearty laugh, Marie apparently joining in the merriment.

"'Why, uncle,' she replied, 'I think you must have been to some wine-cask before to-day, or you would not be so surprised at my anxiety to wait upon these good gentlemen.'

"'There you have it, old Huguet,' returned one of the others, in a familiar tone, apparently accompanied by a heavy slap upon the shoulder. 'She's in love with us, that girl is—and may our good friend Carrier never want her to grace the guillotine, say I! Come, gentlemen, she shall have her way, lover or no lover, and so she brings us up quantity as well as quality, I am content.'

"This was followed by some more rough jesting, and then, greatly to my relief, I heard heavy steps ascending the stairs. Immediately after the voice of Marie said, almost in a whisper—

"'Do not be alarmed—keep perfectly quiet—your presence is not suspected. It is only a party of drunken officers, with whom my uncle is on familiar terms and they will soon depart.'

"'God bless you!' I replied, in a low, tremulous tone.

"Marie said no more, but apparently returned above with the wine, and for an hour I listened to the noisy revelry of the half-intoxicated soldiers, and then all became still.

"I now anxiously awaited the return of my fair preserver; but hour after hour passed away, night set in, and still she did not appear, and still I remained a close prisoner in my uncomfortable quarters. A few more hours passed away, and every moment I became more uncomfortable and uneasy. What could have happened? Had I been seen to enter? Had she been suspected, and herself taken away? The suspense gradually became agonizing. My place of concealment was almost like a coffin. I could sit down, turn round, and stand up, but not in the least degree place myself in a reclining posture. I now, too, began to fancy that the air grew stifling, and a horrible idea of suffocation began to oppress me. Ten, eleven, twelve, and one o'clock sounded from the great bell of the cathedral, and still no deliverance!

"At last, almost wrought to a pitch of frenzy, and feeling that I would as soon risk any death as that of suffocation, I was on the very point of shrieking for assistance, when I heard a light step on the stairs. A moment after the lock was turned, the door opened, and the sweet voice of Marie said, in a cautious whisper:

"'Monsieur de Lisle, there is a suspicion that you are secreted in this house; already a bloody emissary has been here to make inquiry; but fortunately my uncle—who is a staunch Jacobin, and knows nothing of the matter—so stoutly denied the allegation of concealing an aristocrat, that the officer returned without making a search. There is no knowing, however, at what moment he or others may return, and I have trembled for your fate ever since. I would have come to you sooner, but I could not without exciting suspicion. My uncle has just retired to rest, and I have taken the earliest opportunity to approach you, in order to conceal you elsewhere. Here—give me your hand. There—not a word—not a whisper! Move softly, or death may be in your steps! I must conduct you to the church—to the vaults of the dead!'

"Saying this she led me through the darkness, up a flight of steps, through a corridor, along a side-yard, and thence by several narrow, winding passages, to the back door of the church, which she opened with the key used by her uncle. Then conducting me through the body of the church to the altar—where she reverently paused to utter an Ave Maria—she struck a light, stooped down, unlocked and raised a massive door, disclosing a flight of mildewed stone steps, leading into a gloomy vault, from which rushed upward a volume of vitiated, unhealthy air, that nearly extinguished the light which she shaded with her fair hand.

"'I would, sir,' she said, 'that I could give you more pleasant refuge; but this is the only place of safety I know of. I will come to you as often as I can. Here are provisions,' she pursued, taking a step or two aside, and producing a well-filled basket, which she had placed there previously. 'You will there find all you need for the present, with plenty of wine to keep up your spirits!'

"'May God and all the holy saints bless you, my guardian angel!' I exclaimed, impulsively seizing her hand, pressing it to my lips, and fairly bedewing it with tears.

"'There! quick! enter! and may God save us all!' she replied, looking hurriedly and timidly around. 'Every moment we stand here I tremble for your safety!'

"'And I for yours, fair girl!' I rejoined, at once taking the light and basket, and descending to my gloomy prison among the dead.

"'Adieu,' whispered Marie, 'and hope!'

"With this she swung back the heavy door, which, to my fancy, seemed like the clods falling upon my coffin. The next moment the lock was turned, and all became silent as the tomb in which I was buried.

"I need not describe in detail the lonely hours I passed in that awful place—I could not in any manner portray my feelings if I would. The vault was large and gloomy, and on every side I was surrounded by the corrupting relics of mortality.

"Soon after my incarceration there, feeling somewhat exhausted, I partook lightly of the food which Marie had so kindly provided me, and drank a bottle of wine; and then, selecting the driest spot I could find, I threw myself down, and fell asleep.

"I awoke some time the next day, to find my lamp nearly burned out; and a couple of hours later it became extinct, leaving me in almost total darkness—there being only in one direction a faint glimmer, by which I could distinguish day from night.

"I now became impatient for the return of night, expecting Marie to reappear. Night came—passed slowly away—but Marie came not. Oh, the horrors of that night! as I sat there, alone, among the dead, a prey to a thousand maddening fancies!

"Another day passed—another night—but still no deliverer—no appearance of my angelic preserver! What could it mean? Had she been seized and taken away? and was I left to the most dreadful of deaths? Still another day—another night—and my agony became so extreme that I shrieked for help. No answer but the wild echoes along the gloomy vaults of the dead!

"I had now exhausted my provisions, and drunk the last drop of wine. Ghastly famine now stared me in the face, and my excited fancies called up strange phantoms from among the moldering forms around me. Still two more days—two more horrid nights—I sometimes shrieking for help—sometimes praying for death.

"At last, completely exhausted, I threw myself down on the steps, giving up all hope—a victim of the most wretched despair. It was while I thus lay there, that I heard the door open. I looked up, and saw the angelic form of Marie standing above me, shading the light with her hand, endeavoring to peer down into the darkness. I attempted to speak, but the emotion of joy choked my utterance. She called to me—called twice, and loud—but getting no reply, and believing me dead, she uttered a groan, and let the massive door fall back to its place.

"Merciful God! was I really doomed to death in the moment of hope and joy? Fairly quivering with horror, my hair standing on end, I made one desperate effort, staggered to my feet, and gave a wild, prolonged shriek.

"It was heard. Marie returned. She caught my fainting form in her arms. She whispered hope. She brought me food and wine. With tears in her eyes, she explained the cause of her absence. She had herself been suspected, arrested, taken before the dreadful Tribunal, and questioned concerning me. Her firmness and presence of mind had alone saved us both. On her return, she had found a party of soldiers quartered in the dwelling, who, for several days, kept her under strict surveillance. At last they had departed, and she had come to my dwelling—hoping to find me living—fearing to find me dead.

"I need not prolong my story. Two nights after, with the assistance of Marie, disguised in female attire, I made my escape from that city of horrors; and, after many wanderings and vicissitudes, I reached the frontiers of Spain, and thus cheated the unrighteous foes of France of another victim.

"When order was once more restored to my wretched country, I returned to Vannes. I subsequently visited Nantes, and found Marie Sujais looking as beautiful as ever. Gratitude, mingled with the most sublime feelings of affection, induced me to offer her my hand. It was accepted, and she who had so nobly preserved me became my wife.

"You have my story, gentlemen. Truly the ways of Providence are ofttimes wonderful, working out good for us through evil surroundings."

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

FAIRPLAY.—It is difficult, if not impossible, to say positively who was the first printer in England. That honor has been, and is still claimed for William Caxton; but many eminent authorities ascribe it to Frederic Corselis. Some writers say that although Caxton was undoubtedly the one who first used metal types, yet Corselis, at Oxford, had previously printed a work on wooden types. Like similarly doubtful historical points, it is impossible to settle it beyond question either one way or the other.

SENEX.—General Scott has been in the army more than forty years. The battles of Chippewa and Lundy's Lane were fought forty-five years ago.

THEODORE.—You had better postpone your tour of Europe until you shall have graduated and made the tour of the United States and the Canadas. Every man should study and honor his native land above all others.

MRS. D. C. L. says she is "completely at her wit's end in regard to servants." She can't get along with them at all, and all her acquaintances seem to be in the same predicament. "What can be done?" she asks; "will not the LEDGER suggest some relief?" There seems at present no remedy for the evil complained of. Our habits of life are certainly unfavorable for the moral training of servants. They are all human beings like ourselves, with feelings similar to our own; and, perhaps, are more patient, enduring, and odedient than any lady or gentleman would be, if reduced to servitude. It is humanity in the servant which resists the power that subdues her, and maintains her cause with such weapons as she can command. She is not worse than ourselves and our children. A bad boy or a pert little girl is quite as refractory and evil-hearted as a bad servant; but the one is our own flesh and blood, the other is not. We bear with our own, because we must. Charity also teaches us to bear with the faults of others; but it is not easy to be charitable, and then we are *not obliged* to bear with them. An old bachelor, who kept cats and dogs, once said, "They are the best family I can have, because when they annoy me, or I get tired of them, I can hang or drown them, which is more than we can do with boys and girls, you know." But, strange as it is, we can bear much more even from cats and dogs than from servants, because, though the cats and dogs are not our own flesh and blood, they are *our own property*. But servants are neither. We suspect if the evils complained of in the relation of mistress and servant are ever to be removed, it must be by some moral change in the character of civilization itself, or some personal reformation of both classes; for there is no species of argument that you can address to the individual that seems to have any effect. We are all under a sort of a spell—a spell of fashion and custom—that makes us do as other people do, and follow the customs of our class; and the customs of a class are always the effect of the general bearing of society towards it, and its relationship with the rest of the people. As things are, the only way you can manage your servants is to get up first, go to bed last, and rigidly oversee every department of your domestic affairs.

CONTINENTAL.—You are altogether astray, just as all of General Jackson's enemies ever were, and are, whenever they touch upon his history or his character. The old hero deserved all the glory he won. He was the bravest of the brave, and irreproachably honest. When he was a poor man, a note of hand, with his signature or endorsement, would pass wherever he was known, so prompt was he in the discharge of pecuniary, as well as every other kind of liabilities. He sometimes made mistakes, but they were always on the side of patriotism. He loved his country, and was ready at any and all times to fight and die in its defence. He hated schemers, and tricksters, and the whole tribe of petty politicians, and showed them no quarter. What you say about "a certain member of Congress making Old Hickory back down, one day, in Washington," is perfect nonsense. We should like to know who that "certain member of Congress" was. A whole mutinous army, in the wilds of the Southwest, once tried to make General Jackson back down, but he stood before their serried ranks *alone*, and by the power of his eye, and the irresistible air of command which, like a cloud of fire, always surrounds and protects the hero when his soul is deeply aroused, he held them in check and drove them back to their duty. His spirit feasted on danger. He would go in quest of it, just for the luxury of discomfiting it.

A DECEIVED LOVER says that he became engaged to a young lady some two years ago; it was mutually agreed by them that the wedding should be postponed until the return of our correspondent from Europe, whither he had made arrangements to go, and where he should remain about twenty-one months. He went to Europe. During his absence he regularly corresponded with the young lady, who wrote him most satisfactory letters. He sent her many costly presents, and looked forward with eagerness to the time when he should return and make her his wife. He was delayed a month beyond the time set for his return; and on arriving at home, to his surprise and grief learned that his affianced had been married just two weeks. She sent him word that as he did not come home at the time he agreed to come, she supposed he cared nothing for her, and as she had a first-rate chance to marry another, she thought it best to improve the opportunity. Our correspondent says he don't like this explanation—that it is far from satisfactory; and he wants to know what he had better do, and if he can get back the costly presents he sent to the fair deceiver from Europe. He had better do nothing, and let the presents go.

QUEEN CITY writes as follows: "I have been visiting a young lady for some time, and apparently with success, but of late things seem to have changed, and I think others stand better in her favor than I do, and so have discontinued my visits to her for the present. If she should ask me why I did not call any more, would it be improper for me to say that I thought others stood better in her favor than I did?" It would not be improper for you to say so, but it would be very foolish. You are not the only young man who is similarly affected, and our reason for inserting your letter is, that others who have in substance asked the same thing might profit by the answer. You should never exhibit signs of jealousy, or what are called "hard feelings," to a lady, if you would stand well in her esteem, nor should you attempt, even in the most indirect manner, to criticise or control her conduct. What business is it of yours if the young lady in question *does* like others better than she likes you? Has she not a right to do so? Cast aside your foolish jealousy and act like a man, and perhaps you will rise in her esteem and regard.

RODERIC RANDOM says a young lady to whom he was engaged refuses to have anything more to say to him, because he unintentionally became intoxicated a short time ago, and while in that state was led into very bad company; and he wants to know what a man can do under such circumstances. He can only repent of his error, resolve to "do so no more," and ask the forgiveness of those whom his conduct offended. Of course, a young lady of pure heart and refined feelings could not fail to be filled with disgust at such an event; and if a man loses the affections of one dear to him by such bad conduct, he has no right to complain. He must take the consequences of his folly and wickedness.

S. W. E.—We would recommend you to read aloud to your wife the "Book of Esther." The simplicity of Esther's manners and disposition as therein described, will be a good model for the imitation of your wife, while the fate of Haman will serve as a warning to yourself. Envy, hatred, and treachery are bad qualities, and the sooner you rid yourself of them, the better it will be for you and your family.

LAKE SUPERIOR.—You will find our terms of subscription at the head of the first editorial column. They are invariable and inflexible. Like the laws of the Medes and Persians, they admit of neither change nor abatement.

LILLIAN.—We never saw the great clock in the cathedral at Strasburg, and can not therefore tell you, as you request us to do, "how we like the appearance of it." We have often read descriptions of it, however, and can tell you how it is said to operate when striking the hour of noon. The clock is a "monster" for size—being one hundred feet high, thirty wide, and fifteen deep. About twenty feet from the bottom is the dial, on each side of which is a cherub, holding a small mallet in his hand, while over the dial is a small bell; the cherub on the left strikes the first quarter, and that on the right the second quarter. Fifty feet above the dial is a colossal figure of Time, with a bell in his left hand and a scythe in his right. A figure of a young man in front, with a mallet strikes the third quarter on the bell in Time's left hand, and then turns and glides with a slow step around behind Time, when out comes an old man with a mallet and places himself directly in front of the great Reaper. As the hour of twelve comes, the old man deliberately strikes, with much power, twelve times on the bell. He then glides slowly behind Time, and the young man again comes out and takes his position ready to do his duty when called upon by the machinery. As soon as the old man has struck twelve and disappeared, another set of machinery is set in motion some twenty feet higher still, where there is a high cross with the image of Christ upon it. The instant twelve is struck a figure of one of the Apostles walks out from behind, comes in front, turns facing the cross, bows, and walks on around to his place. This is repeated, until twelve figures representing the twelve Apostles, as large as life, walk out, bow and pass on. As the last appears, an enormous game-cock, perched on the pinnacle of the clock, slowly flaps its wings, stretches forth its neck and crows three times, so loud as to be heard outside the church to some distance, and with life-like naturalness. Then all is still as death.

P. B. G.—Some of the chief requisites of oratory are distinctness of utterance, gracefulness of gesticulation, musicalness and sonority of voice, brilliancy of conception, strength and clearness of expression, and the understanding of one's audience. The day for old-fashioned oratory and eloquence has gone by. People now-a-days care but little for high-sounding phrases and wordy circumlocution. Everything must now partake more or less of the two chief types of the age—steam and lightning. So, if you want to be an orator to some purpose, study locomotives and telegraphs—the first for strength and solidity; the second for rapidity and brevity. Force and point are the things. Let your ideas be as bright and sharp as the point of a needle, and then let your logic drive them home with the force of a trip-hammer.

JUDKINS.—We cannot say how long it would take you to become a good lawyer. That will depend upon your capacity, application to business, and opportunities for testing your erudition and skill. Nor can we say anything definite as to your income from the practice of the profession. That subject is altogether indefinite and uncertain. There are nearly five thousand lawyers in this State, and competition, except in this city, is very sharp. Here, it is said, there is so much business to be done, that no lawyer thinks of being envious or jealous of another; but we are inclined to the opinion that the scores of young attornies who hang around the courts, with nothing to do, must occasionally try to alleviate the physical pangs of hunger with the mental pangs of jealousy.

JACK MANDERS says that he is apprenticed to an uncle who beats him unmercifully, starves him, and otherwise ill-treats him; that he has become so exasperated he cannot stand such treatment any longer, and is afraid he shall, in some fit of ungovernable anger, kill his uncle. He therefore thinks he had better run away, and wishes to know what we think about it. You had better state the case to your Sabbath-school teacher, who, you say, seems to take an interest in your welfare. He could probably advise you to such a course, or bring to bear upon your uncle such influences, as would ameliorate your condition. If you can manage to stay your time out, and thoroughly learn your trade, it will be better for you to do so.

B. G. M.—We cannot say how many banks there are now in the United States. On the first day of January last there were one thousand four hundred and ninety-nine, of which two hundred and seventy-nine were in the state of New York, one hundred and seventy-four in the State of Massasetts, ninety-three in Rhode Island, seventy-eight in Pennsylvania, and the rest distributed unequally among the other States. The entire circulation of these banks was $134,301,556, and the amount of specie on hand on the first day of January, 1858, was $84,158,270. The total capital of the banks in the State of New York is $99,680,237. There are fifty-four banks in the city of New York.

FURIOSO.—You of course have a right to let your temper run away with your pocket and your own social comfort if you choose to do so; but you have no right to annoy others with your spleen. A man who cannot control, or rather who *will* not control his temper, should be treated like a fractious child, and be chastised into decency of behavior. No wonder that your children dread to have you come home. In a few years more, their fear of you will change into dislike and contempt, and your old age will be uncheered by affection and sympathy, unless you speedily set about sweetening your temper.

M. G. H.—There are seventy-five regiments in the New York State Militia. They will not average, on muster day, over three hundred men to a regiment, so the entire force is not much more than twenty-two thousand. In a case of emergency, however, the State of New York could furnish some fifty thousand good soldiers, without seriously embarrassing the usual business and trade of the commonwealth. We hope, however, that the time will never come when the Empire State, or any other member of the Union, will be called upon to bring into the field her military force.

X. Y. Z.—The best thing you can do is to give up the dog quietly. As the claimant will have no difficulty in proving that the animal belongs to him, you of course cannot retain it in your possession. Your idea of killing the dog, in case you cannot keep it, is outrageous and disgraceful. A civilized being should always show fair play in whatever contest he engages, and when he is beaten, yield with grace, if not with good humor. It is only the reptile species which hold malice.

QUANDARY.—We can render you no assistance. By striking the constable, while he was in the performance of his duty, you have exposed yourself to a heavy punishment, and all you can do is to abide the event manfully. Your best course would be to own up, acknowledge your error, make an ample apology, and say you are willing to suffer whatever punishment may be adjudged to you. That would excite sympathy in your favor, and predispose the court to treat you with the utmost possible leniency.

C. S. F.—You might as well give up the contest first as last. You will be beaten in the end, no matter how desperately you fight, and will have a round bill of costs to pay, besides incurring the condemnation of the community. Your father had a right to make his will to suit himself; and because *you* once had a quarrel with the female relative to whom he bequeathed the property in dispute, you should not attempt to dishonor him and defraud her by seeking to defeat his benevolent bequest.

LADY BELL.—You should pattern after the heroine whose name you have used for a signature, and love your elderly husband as dearly as Lady Bell Fourreau loved Sir Charles, if you would have him treat you with the indulgence you desire. Keep your eye on Lady Bell, as the story of "Richard Hoffman" progresses, and you may learn the secret of a young wife's fascinating an old husband, and *keeping* him fascinated.

F. L. T.—We can give you no information in regard to the doctrines and tenets of the Mormons. We have never studied their "prophets" nor their system of theology, and probably never shall. They must be very vile, however, else they could not produce such vicious fruit. The conduct of the Mormons is sufficiently conclusive as to the abominableness of their system.

A GERMAN SUBSCRIBER asks if it would be foolish for him to marry a woman twelve years older than himself, and would like to know if a woman ever gets so old that she would be offended at an offer of marriage. In reply to the last question, we are inclined to say no. As for your marrying a woman twelve years your senior, the folly or wisdom thereof depends upon circumstances.

SOUCHONG.—Tea, when used in moderation, is not detrimental to health. If it be made of undue strength and drank in immoderate quantity, it will prove injurious to the strongest constitution. The same remarks will apply to the use of coffee as a table beverage.

A.—You should state the case to the young lady and her mother with the same frankness and gentleness with which you have stated it to us. Explain fully to them how it came to pass that you made the mistake, and they will undoubtedly overlook the matter.

BOSTON.—It seems to us that you should either marry the young lady or else permit her to announce the rupture of the engagement according to the dictates of her own desires and judgment. The breaking off of a marriage engagement does not affect a man so injuriously as it does a woman.

JEPTHE.—Having offended the young lady, you must now either win her back by a sufficiently ample apology, or let her go. It is not degrading to acknowledge a fault, and ask forgiveness of those whom we have wronged; on the contrary, it is ennobling.

INVENTOR.—We have no desire to make our fortune by speculating in patent rights. The invention you mention may be "the greatest thing of the age." We hope it is; but we would not give a dime for "half of the right"—or for the whole of it. Such things are not in our line.

S. M. D.—You are mistaken. Judges in the United States Courts are appointed for life, and can only be removed on impeachment or conviction of official misconduct. The present Chief Justice of the United States is the Hon. Roger B. Taney. He was appointed by President Jackson.

*** *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*